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WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

AND HIS THREE FRIENDS

BEN, ANTHONIE *and* FRANCIS

FRANK A. KENDALL

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FROM

John Vance, Esq.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE
AND HIS THREE FRIENDS

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

AND HIS THREE FRIENDS

BEN, ANTHONIE *and* FRANCIS

By

FRANK A. KENDALL

W. A. BUTTERFIELD
BOSTON
1911

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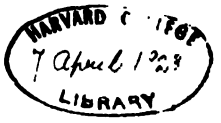

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" Firſt my feare then my curſie, laſt my ſpeech.
My feare, is your diſpleaſure, my curſy, my duty, & my ſpeech, to beg your pardons: if you looke for a good ſpeech now, you vndo me, for what I haue to ſay is of mine owne making, and what indeed (I ſhould ſay) wil (I doubt) proue mine own marring: but to the purpoſe, and ſo to the venture."

William Shakespeare

And His Three Friends

-:-

WHAT IS AN ACROSTIC

What is an acrostic? We know what is meant by the word today. Had it formerly a broader meaning?

In 1682, in the course of a merciless and withering satire, John Dryden wrote in "Macflecknoe"—

> "Thy genius calls thee not to purchase fame
> In keen iambics, but mild anagram.
> Leave writing plays, and choose for thy command
> Some peaceful province in Acrostic land,
> Where thou mayest Wings display and Altars raise
> And torture one poor word ten thousand ways."

The satire was directed against Shadwell; the references were to certain literary tricks which Dryden affects to despise; and it is probable that he had especially in mind George Herbert (1593-1632), selections from whose writings justify literally the mention of "anagram," "Wings" and "Altars."

"MILD ANAGRAM"

An anagram, as the reader knows, consists of the formation of a word from the identical letters of another word. Here is one of Herbert's which is certainly mild:—

Ana- { MARY / ARMY } *gram.*

HOw well her name an *Army* doth preſent,
In whom the *Lord of hoſts* did pitch his tent!

"WINGS DISPLAY"

The following poem of Herbert's appears in two stanzas on two facing pages, under the title "Easter wings." It is an example of a reverent and devotional attitude of mind expressed in what at first sight seems to us a fanciful and almost trivial form; but as scholarly and balanced a critic as Professor Palmer finds in this poem a decadence and growth in the thought of the lines corresponding to their varied length. *

34 *The Church.*

¶ Easter wings.

Lord, who createdſt man in wealth and ſtore,
Though foolifhly he loſt the ſame,
Decaying more and more,
Till he became
Moſt poore:
With thee
O let me riſe
As larks, harmoniouſly,
And ſing this day thy victories:
Then ſhall the fall further the flight in me

The Church. 35

¶ Easter wings.

My tender age in ſorrow did beginne:
And ſtill with ſickneſſes and ſhame
Thou didſt ſo puniſh ſinne,
That I became
Moſt thinne.
With thee
Let me combine,
And feel this day thy victorie:
For, if I imp my wing on thine,
Affliction ſhall advance the flight in me.

Easter

H. Ba-

* "The form of this poem is not dictated by imitative considerations merely, but — as usual with Herbert — is shaped by the subject, in this case decline and enlargement."

"ALTARS RAISE"

Herbert also wrote a poem entitled "The Altar." The form which these lines fill needs no explanation, but like the other poem, it shows the effect on a devout mind of the current love for the curious.

The Church.

The Altar.

A broken ALTAR, Lord, thy ſervant reares,
Made of a heart, and cemented with teares:
Whoſe parts are as thy hand did frame;
No workmans tool hath touch'd the ſame.
A HEART alone
Is ſuch a ſtone,
As nothing but
Thy pow'r doth cut.
Wherefore each part
Of my hard heart
Meets in this frame,
To praiſe thy name.
That it I chance to hold my peace,
Theſe ſtones to praiſe thee may not ceaſe.
O let thy bleſſed SACRIFICE be mine,
And ſanctifie this ALTAR to be thine.

These examples show what attention literary men paid to mere outward form while still treating their subjects with care and force and even with reverence. They also show the control of the printer that the author was forced to exercise in order to be assured that his purpose would be fulfilled. But the chief object in presenting them here is to show the breadth of "Acrostic land," and that the word "acrostic" was applied generally to literary tricks.

"TORTURE ONE WORD TEN THOUSAND WAYS"

I am in doubt as to what is meant by the line in "Macflecknoe"—"torture one poor word ten thousand ways."

Perhaps a clue is furnished in a Latin poem of Herbert's where a series of anagrams on the word "*Roma*" occurs entitled

Roma; Anagr.

Oram Maro
Ramo Armo
Mora Amor

Another clue to the meaning of the line "torture one poor word ten thousand ways" may perhaps be found in a tortuous form of acrostic which has lately attracted some attention.

MR. BOOTH'S BOOK

A work written by Mr. William Stone Booth * and published two years ago last May is worthy of much more study and more careful attention, even on the part of those who would not agree with its apparent conclusions, than has been given to it. After some interesting chapters on the use and users of curious literary devices, such as anagrams, ciphers, and acrostics, and on the currency of anonymity and pseudonymity, Mr. Booth discloses an "acrostic" method of structurally concealing words, names, or short statements within the text of a stanza, page, or passage, a sort of "*Omnia per omnia*," without necessarily distorting the structure or sense of the passage itself.

THE ACROSTIC METHOD

The method is simple, absolutely inflexible and easy to apply either in "inserting" or in "extracting" the hidden word or phrase.

The acrostics appear usually in three forms: —

On Initials.
On Terminals, (i.e. on the letters at *either* end of the words of the text).
On all the letters of all words.

* Some Acrostic Signatures of Francis Bacon. Houghton, Mifflin Co.

Whichever of these acrostics appears, the rule for finding them is the same, viz: —

Begin with a suspicion or assumption or with a suggestion from the text, and having assumed the form and the word or words of the acrostic, take the first letter required and then, in order, the letters of the assumed words in the order in which they are needed and in which they first appear in the text, following the text forward on one line and backward on the next, so that if the text were taken by each end and, as it were, pulled out, the text would appear as a consecutive string; hence the name "String acrostic." One must not pass a needed letter in order to make progress possible later in the text, but after checking one needed letter must check the next needed letter as he comes to it.

It is evident that if an "acrostic" is to begin at *any point whatever* and to end at *any point whatever*, one may read anything he wishes if he read far enough. The first test of an acrostic is that it begin and end at such distinctive points as the first or last letter of a title, or a terminal of a corner word, or a printer's signature, or a remarkably significant word; or two or more acrostics thus beginning may end at a common point, or an acrostic may in some manner be "coextensive" with the text, i.e. beginning at a given point it shall follow around to that point again.

The "String" feature is an ancient device *; the sequence of the "next needed letter" combined with the string is Mr. Booth's discovery or invention, — and whether a discovery or an invention Mr. Booth's ingenuity and the subtlety of the device are not to be denied. Even if there is not sufficient evidence to prove its *actual use*, it undoubtedly *could have been used* for the very purposes alleged by Mr. Booth. †

* Claudian, writing at the beginning of the fifth century A.D., tells in his "de Bello Gothico" that Alaric was urged on to attack Rome by a voice which delivered to him these lines; —

"*Rumpe omnes, Alarice, moras, hoc impiger annO*
Alpibus Italiae ruptis penetrabis ad urbeM."

A true acrostic (*AKROS* = "at the end": *STICHOS* = "a line"), recognized as such by scholars, and indicated in at least two editions, is here presented, which, read forward on the first line and backward on the second line, on the "terminals" of the lines, gives "*ROMA.*"

† One of Mr. Booth's most intelligent critics names certain conditions, which if found would convince him of an intentional method.

Mr. Booth has shown the presence in "acrostics" of certain names and phrases which if intentional, are undoubtedly significant, in the passages in which they occur, though their significance is not necessarily "exclusive."

Mr. Booth's argument for intention is based upon the discovery of each of these names or phrases in a series which it is claimed cannot be duplicated in passages taken at random from literature in general, although the phrase or name is undoubtedly to be found here and there in random and unrelated passages.

These series of acrostics have been compared to series of extraordinary deals at cards to the dealer's own advantage, while a number of similar deals occurring at various tables and at diverse times, would (like the occasional acrostics) have no significance.

Granting, however, that such acrostics as Mr. Booth has traced occur with greater frequency in a given group than in the same number of passages taken at random, and granting also that perfect acrostics do occur at random, how is the status of a given individual passage to be determined, if his series are all that can be discovered?

Moreover, it seems to the writer, neither Mr. Booth nor his critics have directed enough attention to two very important phases of the subject; first, — the method itself apart from the application of the method to the building up of some theory of authorship; secondly, — the discovery of significant acrostics in significant places even if these may not be repeated in series — for example the "Donna Leonora" acrostics in the Milton poems.

The writer has been impressed by Mr. Booth's work, especially by certain details and incidentals, and has found a study of the subject interesting and diverting. He has tried neither to prove nor to disprove its conclusions, but has attempted to see if the method were capable of further development.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

After two years' investigation it seems to the writer that he has determined the following facts: — some of them for conven-

ience stated in the form of answers to questions that are frequently asked.

1. *Qu.* Is it not possible to find acrostics anywhere?
   Ans. The occurrence of acrostics that are clearly accidental in random passages is much more frequent than one would gather from Mr Booth's assumptions.

2. *Qu.* Have you looked for other names? With what result?
   Ans. Yes. Occasional acrostics that lead to impossible conclusions are to be found to some extent in some of the passages in which Mr. Booth has found "Baconian" acrostics.

3. *Qu.* How could one write his fancy freely and keep these acrostics in his mind at the same time? (assuming that the acrostics are not accidental).
   Ans. The first draft must have been written freely and the acrostics inserted afterwards, for the "tricking" of a passage in order to insert acrostics (even a considerable number of them in a few lines) is an easy process; and the sense, meter, and even the wording need not greatly change, especially if the variant spelling of the 16th century is allowed.

4. *Qu.* Do some acrostics "work" and some not?
   Ans. In attempting to read acrostics there are certain words, names and phrases which it seems almost impossible to find at all, while others form a numerous series. Any of these would be equally significant if found with a frequency which could be proved to be unusual.

5. *Qu.* How could Mr. Booth's evidence be reinforced?

Ans. Within the text of certain exceptional passages certain words, names or phrases, and sometimes several of these, may be traced in acrostics to a degree far beyond that which Mr. Booth's diagrams indicate. Such a proven exceptional and unusual repetition of significant acrostics would strengthen the evidence of intention in the acrostic method discovered or devised by Mr. Booth.

6. *Qu.* If this acrostic method is intentional what have you to say about other methods that other people present, the "bi-literal" cipher for instance?

Ans. I have not studied the application of the "bi-literal" cipher, but no matter what tricks may have been played with a given piece of text, when that text is in its final literal form, the "bi-literal" cipher may be applied, as it is absolutely independent of the sense, spelling and division into lines, and depends entirely on the use of two different fonts of type.

7. *Qu.* Are you not proving too much?

Ans. If I understand this frequent inquiry, it seems to me to beg the question. Distrusting my own negative testimony to a certain degree, I ask comparison of the discoveries shown in diagram with what it is possible to find in random and unrelated passages.

It is my purpose to present to the reader, without argument and without attempting to defend or deny any theory of authorship or of intention, certain acrostics which by a little patience he may find in the page that forms the subject of this paper — or may read from the diagrams without the trouble of verifying them.

Those who wish to verify the acrostics may have the text always opposite the diagrams by unfolding the fly leaf at the end of the book.

Acrostics in the diagrams are shown as follows: —

On Initials — by Roman Capitals.
On Terminals — by Italic Capitals.
On All letters — by small letters.

Unless otherwise stated acrostics are to be read *on all letters*.

A few remarks are necessary about the rules for reading the acrostics in the page about to be considered, and which I have applied to all the passages I have examined.

i and j are interchangeable.

u and v are interchangeable (in lower case type).

"Thendeuour" in the fifth line and "shalbe" in the thirteenth I consider as one word in reading terminals or initials.

No words are omitted in reading through a given portion, whether stage directions, names of characters or words in parentheses, and no exceptions are for any reason admitted.

Notice that the method used in finding the acrostics is the same in every case; that they pass once, and once only, through the text from the point of beginning to where they end, passing around the outside when necessary to complete the progress.

THE TEXT

The text shown on the opposite page is the first page of the 1598 Quarto of "A pleaſant conceited Comedie called Loues Labor's Loſt," the only known edition of that play previous to the 1623 Folio, and is a reproduction from "A Facsimile in Photo-lithography by William Griggs." The facsimile is "from the Duke of Devonshire's copy, the confounded mounter of whose pages has cut off part of some head lines and foot lines, and the whole of some signatures." *

In this case the catch word "To" has been trimmed, but the lower part has been restored in the present reproduction by the dotted lines. The proper signature for this page is A_2. If it appeared in the original it was trimmed away by the mounter. The other signatures in the quarto were usually on the same line with the catchword, but in at least one case the signature was in the line below the catchword. The presence of the signature would not affect the acrostics that are to be illustrated.

* F. J. Furnivall. Foreword to Quarto 1, 1598

Enter Ferdinand K. of Nauar, Berovvne, *Longavill, and Dumaine.*

Ferdinand.

LET Fame, that all hunt after in their lyues,
Liue regiſtred vpon our brazen Tombes,
And then grace vs, in the diſgrace of death:
When ſpight of cormorant deuouring Time,
The endeuour of this preſent breath may buy:
That honour which ſhall bate his ſythes keene edge,
And make vs heires of all eternitie.
Therefore braue Conquerours, for ſo you are,
That warre againſt your owne affections,
And the huge armie of the worldes deſires.
Our late edict ſhall ſtrongly ſtand in force,
Nauar ſhall be the wonder of the worlde,
Our Court ſhalbe a lyttle Achademe,
Still and contemplatyue in liuing art.
You three, *Berowne, Dumaine,* and *Longauill,*
Haue ſworne for three yeeres tearme, to liue with me:
My fellow Schollers, and to keepe thoſe ſtatutes
That are recorded in this ſedule here.
Your othes are paſt, and now ſubſcribe your names:
That his owne hand may ſtrike his honour downe,
That violates the ſmalleſt branch herein.
If you are armd to do, as ſworne to do,
Subſcribe to your deepe othes, and keepe it to.

Longauill. I am reſolued, tis but a thee yeeres faſt:
The minde ſhall banquet, though the body pine,
Fat paunches haue leane pates: and dayntie bits
Make rich the ribbes, but bankrout quite the wits.

Dumaine. My louing Lord; *Dumaine* is mortefied,
The groſſer manner of theſe worldes delyghts:
He throwes vppon the groſſe worlds baſer ſlaues

To

A CONCEALED TITLE

In most of the quarto editions the title of the play is repeated either in full or in an abbreviated form at the head of the first page of the text. This is not true of this quarto of "Loues Labor's Loſt." Is the title concealed?

Begin with the "l" of "lyues," the initial of the first right hand word of the text. Read to the left and downward through the text to the "T" of the catchword "To" having selected the initials in the order needed, having spelled

"LOVES LABORS LOST"

and having just passed through the passage from the first initial in the string to the last.

It is to be remembered that in reading an initial acrostic all letters save initials are nulls.

FIGURE I.

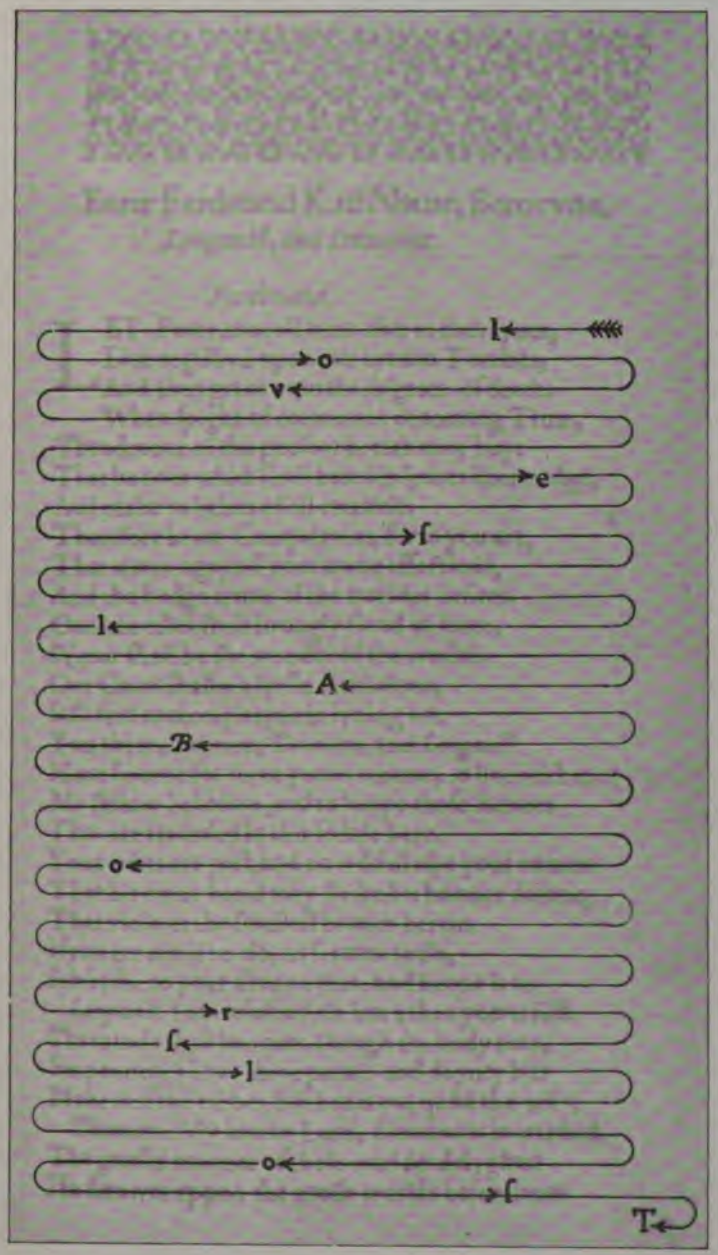
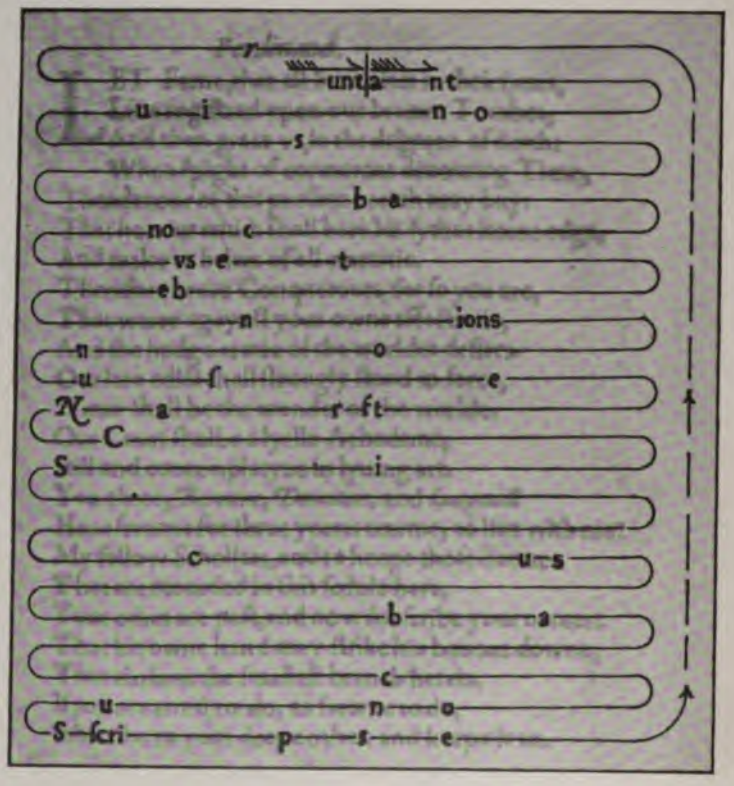


FIGURE II.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In the first line we are struck with the letters "unt" of the word "hunt" next to the letter "a" of "after. This gives us the beginning of "*Antonius*" and the end of "*scripserunt.*" We try the sentence "*Antonius Baconus et Ben Ionsonus et Franciscus Baconus scripserunt*" to see if it will run through the "speech and Ferdinand," an even number of lines and the most conspicuous "unit" on the page.

Begin with the "a" of "after." Read to the right and downward, through Ferdinand's speech, and pass up the outside of the page, then through the name Ferdinand and back through the first line again to the "t" of "hunt," as indicated by the arrows, selecting the letters as they first appear in their needed order, and we read

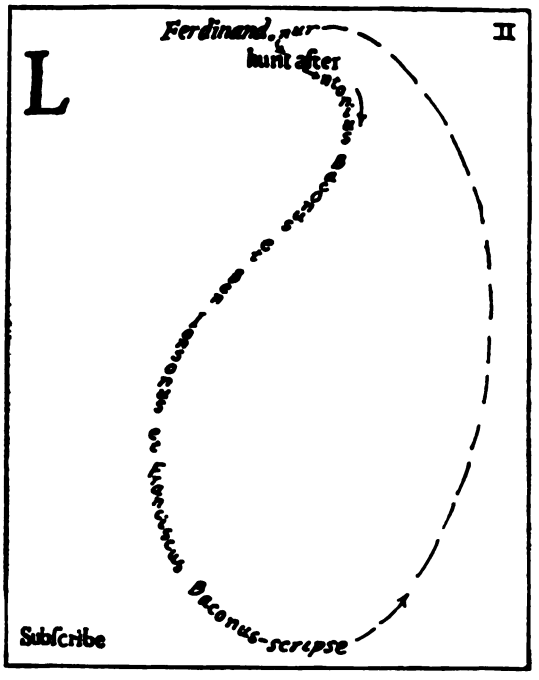
"*Antonius Baconus et Ben Ionsonus et Franciscus Baconus scripserunt.*"

This illustrates the method used in all the acrostics shown.

We are led by our success to try the other permutations in the order of the names with and without the Latin verbs "*scripserunt*" and "*invenerunt.*" With what success will now appear.

Of course in order to accomplish this we must take all the chances offered by the letters necessary for the beginning and ending of our acrostics appearing next to each other, no matter in what part of the text they appear. It is clear that corner letters and others in conspicuous positions would not suffice in number.

FIGURE II A.



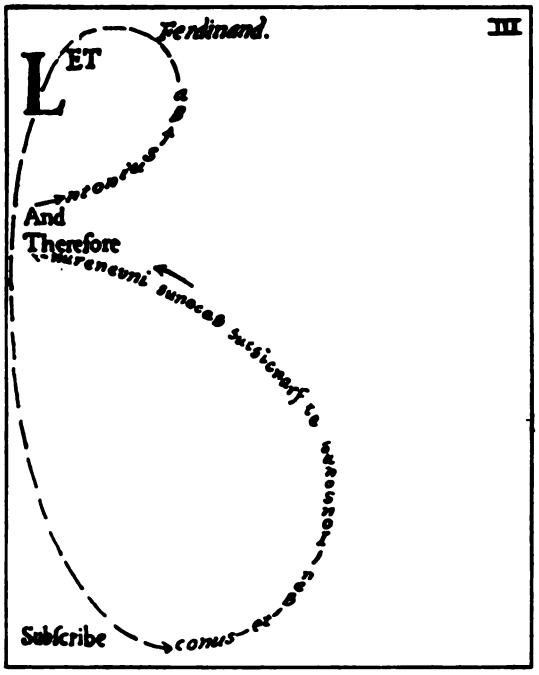
Here the same acrostic is indicated in a simpler form.

The arrow below the "a" of "after" indicates that the acrostic is to be read down to the right, the dotted line indicates the passing up on the outside and into the line "Ferdinand" and the last arrow indicates that the "t" of "hunt" is reached while passing to the right.

For convenience this simpler form will be used in indicating all the acrostics that are illustrated in this paper.

The reader is to note that the illustrations are diagrams only; the form of the curves does not indicate the position of the acrostic letters in the text. This is in answer to a question frequently asked by those who have read this paper but have not attempted to verify the illustrations.

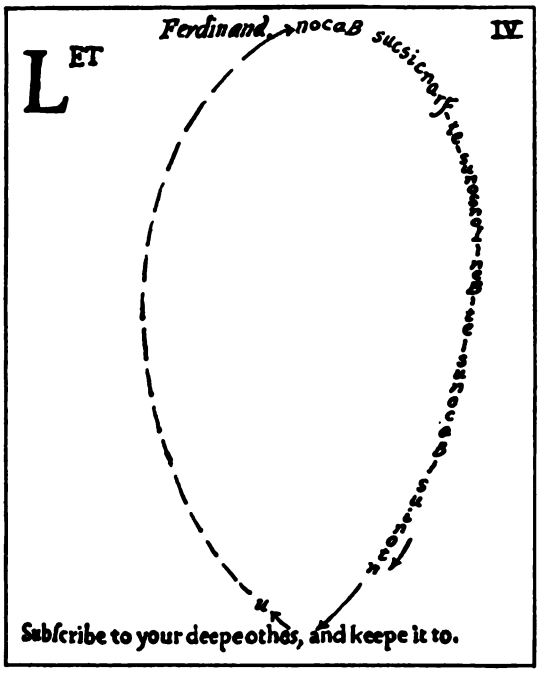
FIGURE III.



From the "A" of "And" in the seventh line of the speech read
to the right and up
down the outside
to the right and up
to the "t" of "therefore" in the eighth line of the speech

"*Antonius Baconus et Ben Ionsonus et Franciscus Baconus invenerunt.*"

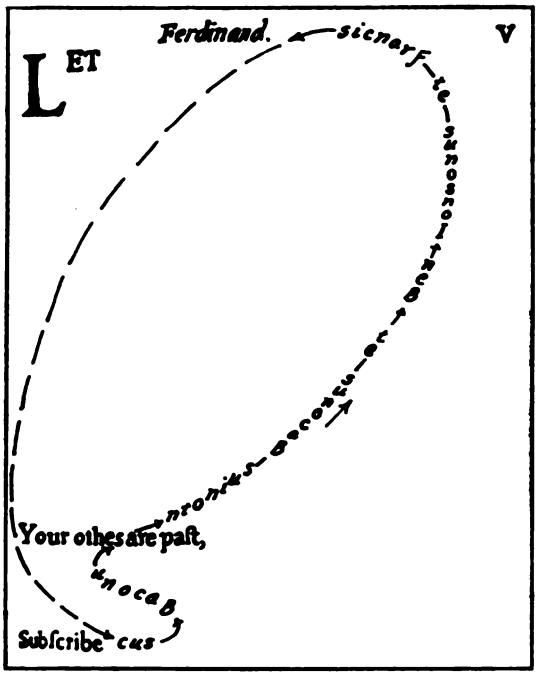
FIGURE IV.



From "s" of "othes" in the last line of the speech read
to the left
up on the outside
to the right and down
to the "a" of "and" in the last line spelling backward

"*Antonius Baconus et Ben Ionsonus et Franciscus Baconus.*"

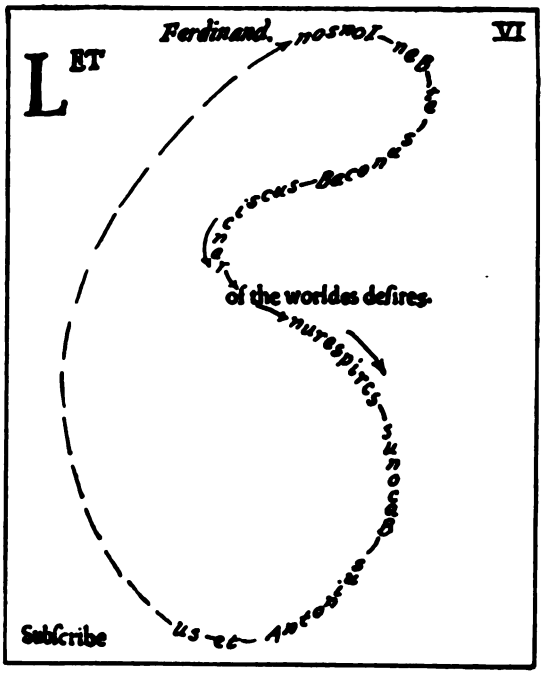
FIGURE V.



From the "a" of "are" in the nineteenth line of the speech read
to the right and up
down the outside
to the right and up
to the "s" of "othes" in the nineteenth line

"*Antonius Baconus et Ben Ionsonus et Franciscus Baconus.*"

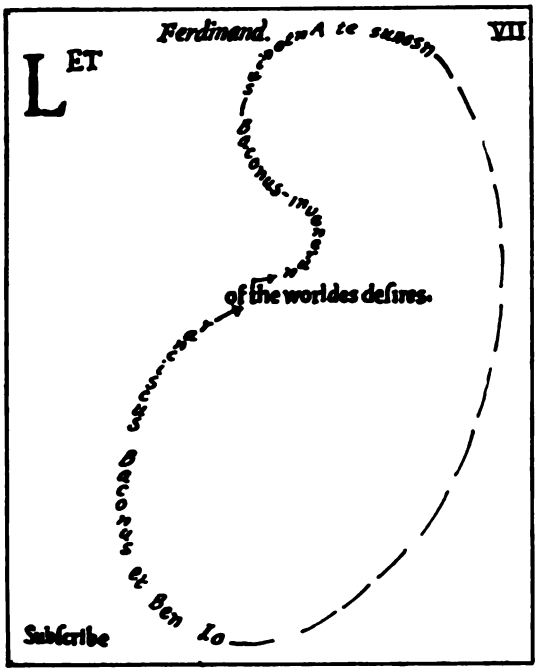
FIGURE VI.



From the "t" of "the" before "worldes" in the tenth line read
to the right and down
up on the outside
to the right and down
to the "f" of "of" in the tenth line spelling backward

"*Franciscus Baconus et Ben Ionsonus et Antonius Baconus scripserunt.*"

FIGURE VII.



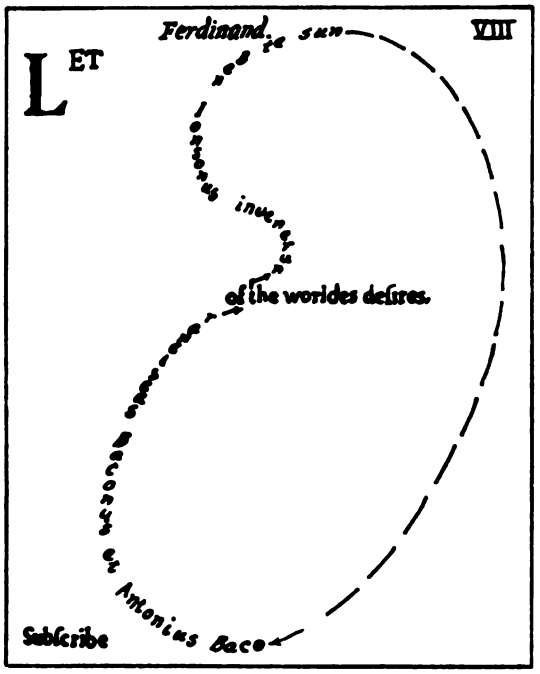
From the same "t" of "the" read

to the right and up
down on the outside
to the left and up

to the "f" of "of" spelling backward

"*Franciscus Baconus et Ben Ionsonus et Antonius Baconus invenerunt.*"

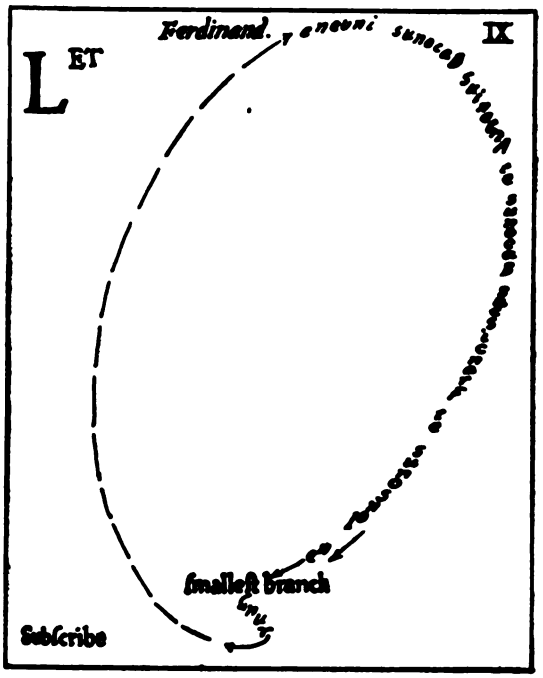
FIGURE VIII.



From the same "t" to the same "f" in Figure VI spell backward

"*Franciscus Baconus et Antonius Baconus et Ben Ionsonus invenerunt.*"

FIGURE IX.



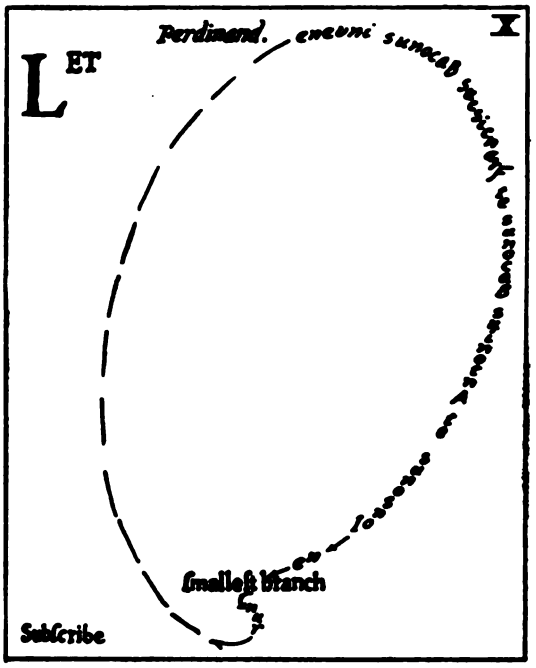
From the "t" of "ſmalleſt" in the twenty-first line of the speech read

to the left and down
up the outside
to the right and down

to the "b" of "branch" in the twenty-first line, spelling backward

"*Ben Ionsonus et Franciscus Baconus et Antonius Baconus invenerunt.*"

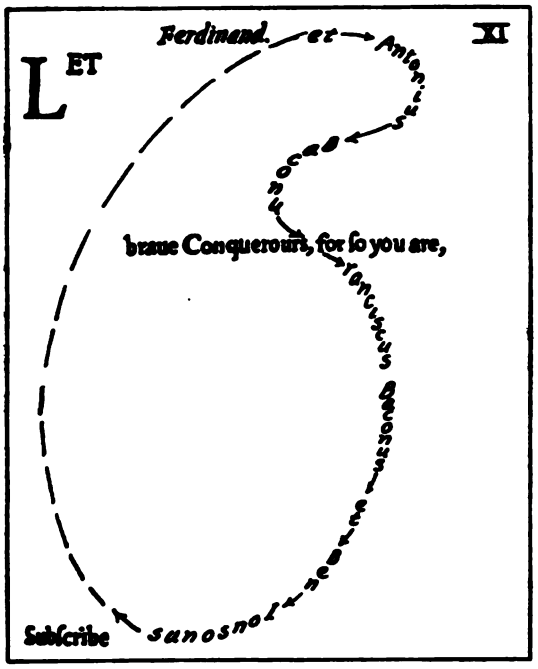
FIGURE X.



Read in the same manner between the same two letters, spelling backward

"*Ben Ionsonus et Antonius Baconus et Franciscus Baconus invenerunt.*"

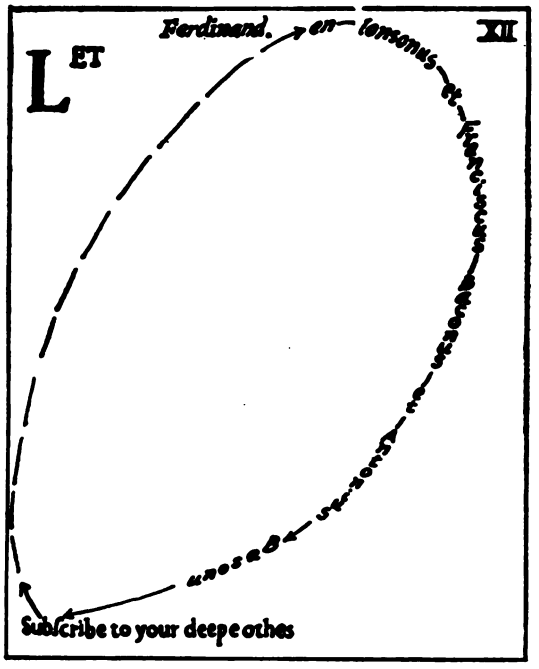
FIGURE XI.



From the "f" of "for" in the eighth line of the speech read
to the right and down
up the outside
to the right and down
to the "s" of "Conquerors" in the eighth line of the speech

"*Franciscus Baconus et Ben Ionsonus et Antonius Baconus.*"

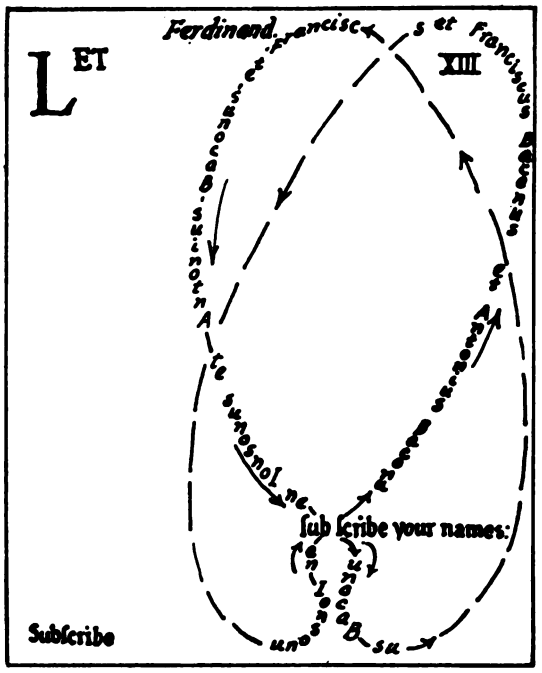
FIGURE XII.



From the "b" of "Subſcribe" in the last line of the speech read
to the left
up on the outside
to the right and down
to the "f" of the same word "Subſcribe"

"*Ben Ionsonus et Franciscus Baconus et Antonius Baconus.*"

FIGURE XIII.



From the second "f" of "ſubſcribe" in the nineteenth line of the speech read

to the right and down
up the outside
to the left and down

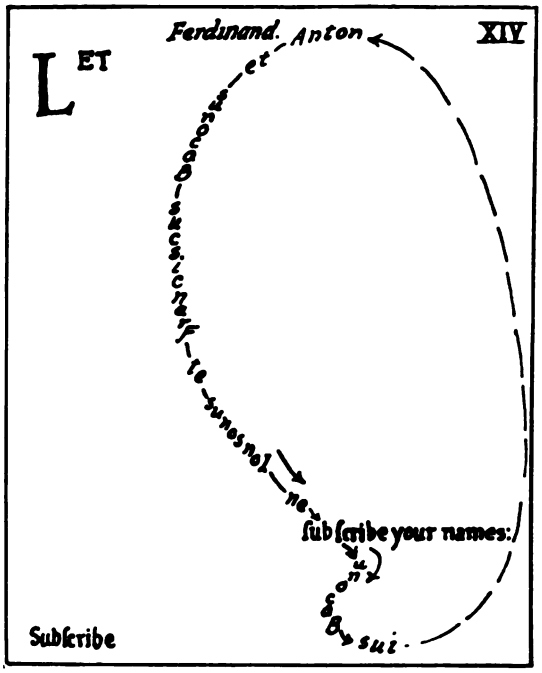
to the first "b" of "ſubſcribe," spelling backward

"*Ben Ionsonus et Antonius Baconus et Franciscus Baconus.*"

From the same "f" read in the opposite direction to the same "b" spelling backward

"*Ben Ionsonus et Franciscus Baconus et Antonius Baconus.*"

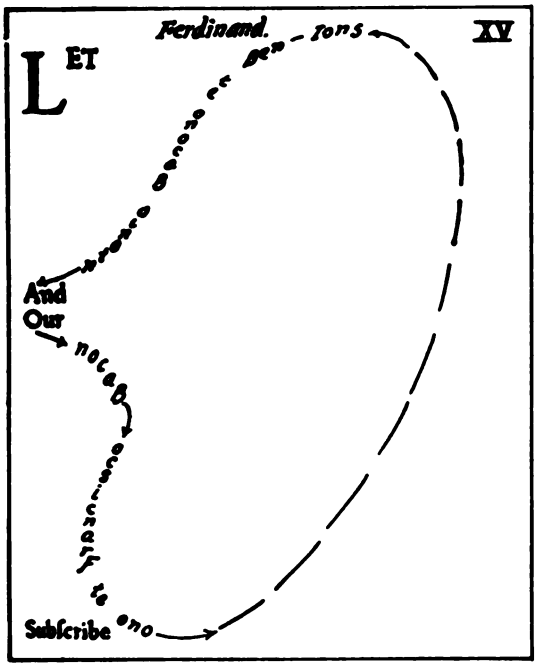
FIGURE XIV.



From the same "f" of "ſubſcribe to the same "b" of "ſubſcribe" spell backward in the direction indicated

"*Ben Ionsonus et Franciscus Baconus et Antonius Baconus.*"

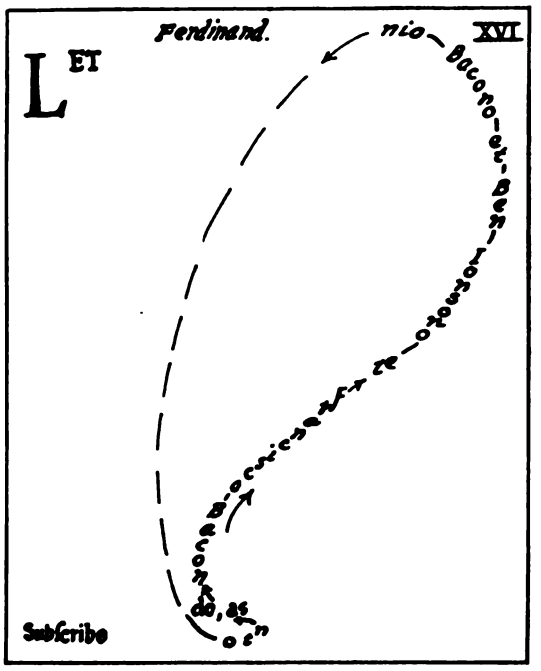
FIGURE XV.



From the "O" of "Our" in the eleventh line of the speech read
to the right and down
up the outside
to the left and down
to the "A" of "And" in the tenth line of the speech spelling backward

"*Antonio Bacono et Ben Ionsono et Francisco Bacono.*"

FIGURE XVI.

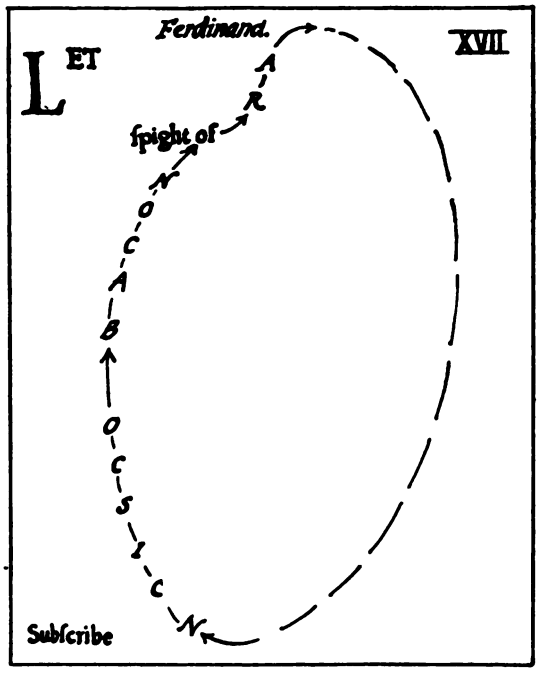


From the "o" of "do" in the last line but one read
to the left and up
down the outside
to the right and up
to the "a" of "as" in the same line of the speech spelling backward

"*Antonio Bacono et Ben Ionsono et Francisco Bacono.*"

These are the only places on the page where "a" and "o" are adjacent letters.

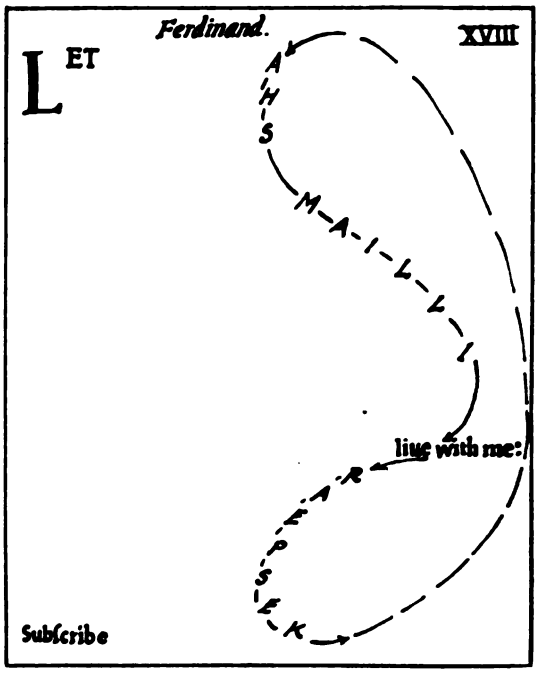
FIGURE XVII.



From the "f" of "of" in the fourth line read on terminals
to the right and up
down the outside
to the left and up
to the "o" of the same "of" in the fourth line

"*FRANCISCO BACONO.*"

FIGURE XVIII.

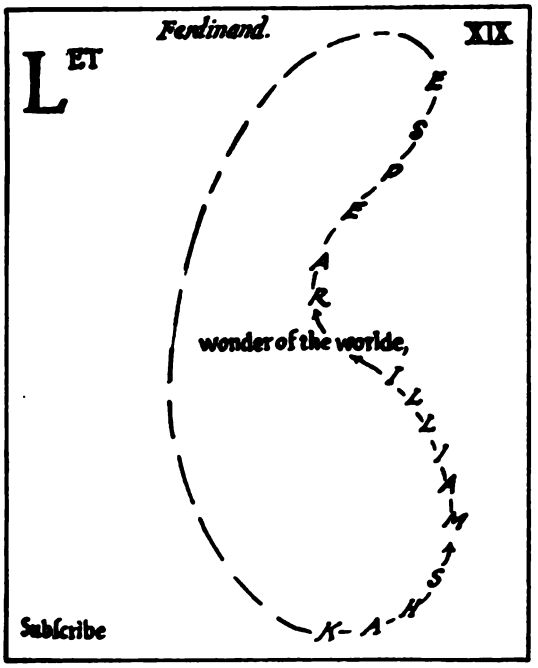


From the "e" of "liue" in the sixteenth line read on terminals
to the left and down
up the outside
to the left and down
to the "w" of "with" in the sixteenth line spelling backward

"*WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE.*"

Remember this when we read plates LIV and LV

FIGURE XIX.

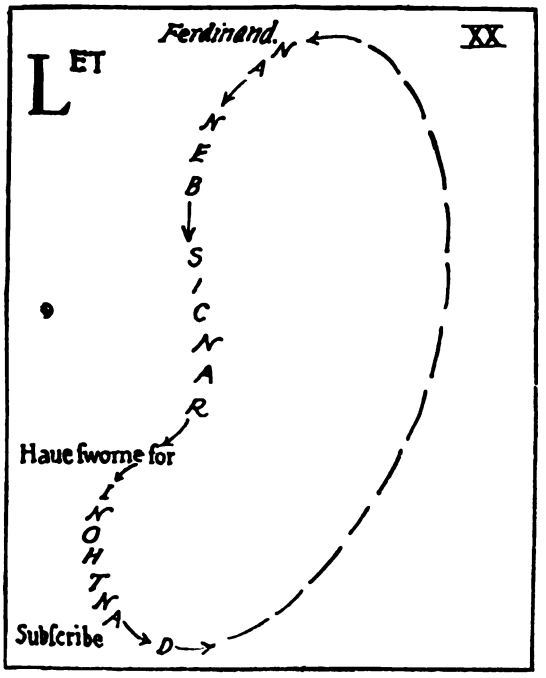


From the "e" of the second "the" in the twelfth line read on terminals
to the left and up
down the outside
to the right and up
to the "w" of "worldes" in the twelfth line spelling backward

"*WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE.*"

See plate LIX

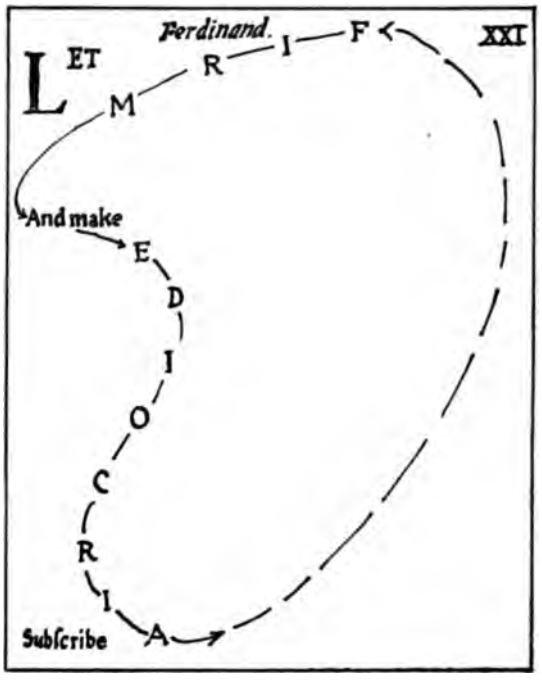
FIGURE XX.



From the "e" of "ſworne" in the sixteenth line read on terminals
to the left and down
up the outside
to the left and down
to the "f" of "for" in the sixteenth line spelling backward

"*FRANCIS BEN AND ANTHONIE.*"

FIGURE XXI.



From the "m" of "make" in the seventh line read on initials
to the right and down
up the outside
to the left and down
to the "A" of "And" in the seventh line

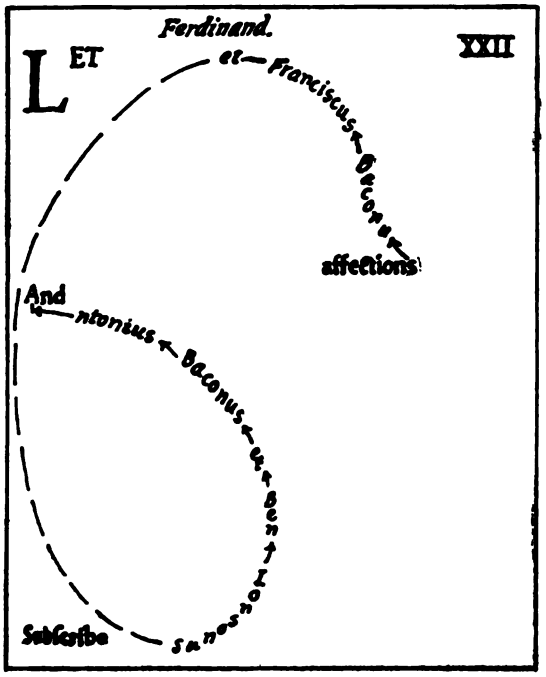
"MEDIOCRIA FIRMA"

N. Bacon eques auratus & magni sigilli Angliae Custos librum hunc bibliothecae Cantabrig. dicauit.
1574.

It may be well to call attention again to the fact that in "initial acrostics" all the letters but initials are nulls.

The "A" of "And" and the "m" of "make" are contiguous initials, and hence the "Key" of this acrostic is complete.

FIGURE XXII.



Take the text of the first speech alone.

From the "s" of "affections" in the ninth line read

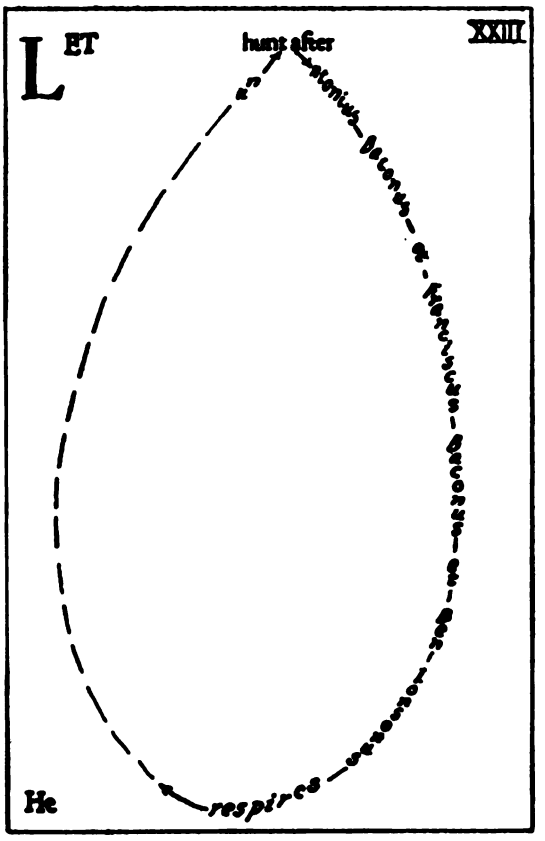
to the left and up
down the outside
to the right and up

to the "A" of "And" in the tenth line, spelling backward

"*Antonius Baconus et Ben Ionsonus et Franciscus Baconus.*"

To read through a passage containing an odd number of lines one must begin at *one* end of a line and end at the *other* end of the next line.

FIGURE XXIII.



We have thus far been concerned with the first speech and the name of its speaker. Let us now examine the text of the whole page.

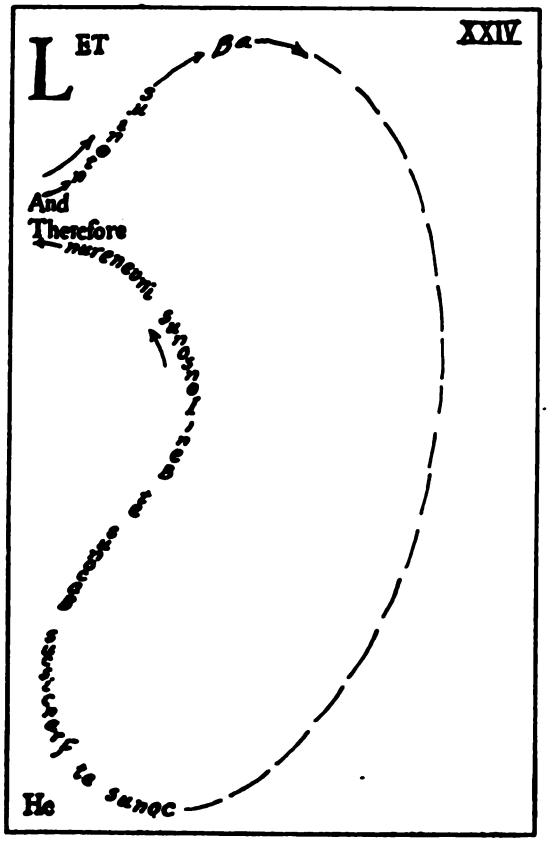
From the "a" of "after" in the first line of the text read

to the right and down
up the outside
to the left

to the "t" of "hunt"

"*Antonius Baconus et Franciscus Baconus et Ben Ionsonus scripserunt.*"

FIGURE XXIV.



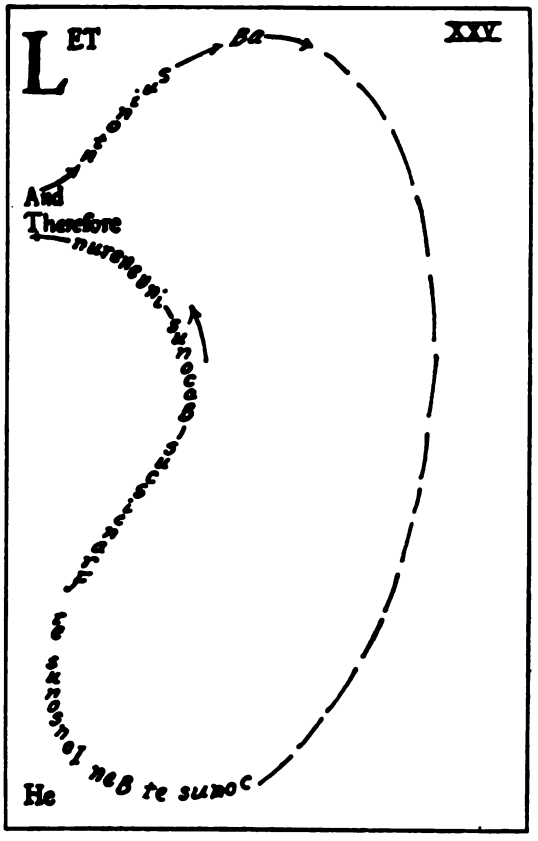
From the "A" of "And" in the seventh line of the text read

to the right and up
down the outside
to the left and up

to the "T" of "Therefore" in the eighth line

"*Antonius Baconus et Franciscus Baconus et Ben Ionsonus invenerunt.*"

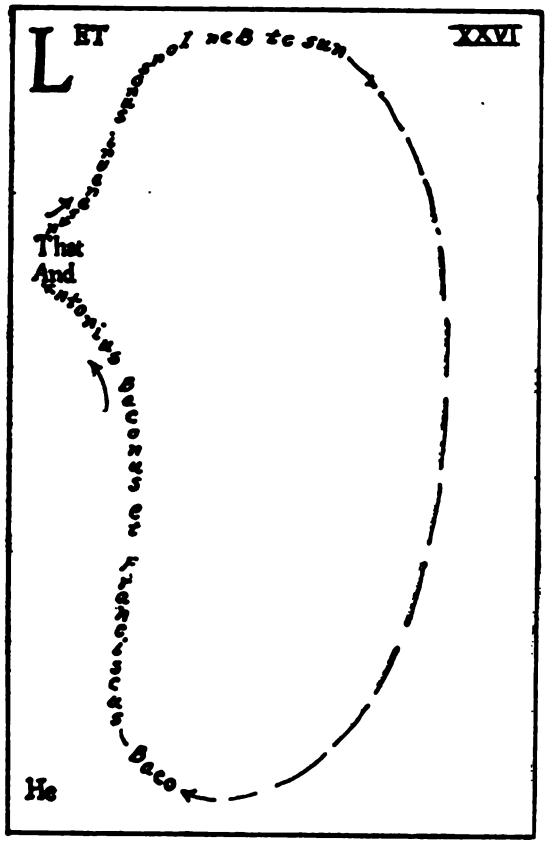
FIGURE XXV.



From the same "A" to the same "T" read in the same manner

"*Antonius Baconus et Ben Ionsonus et Franciscus Baconus invenerunt.*"

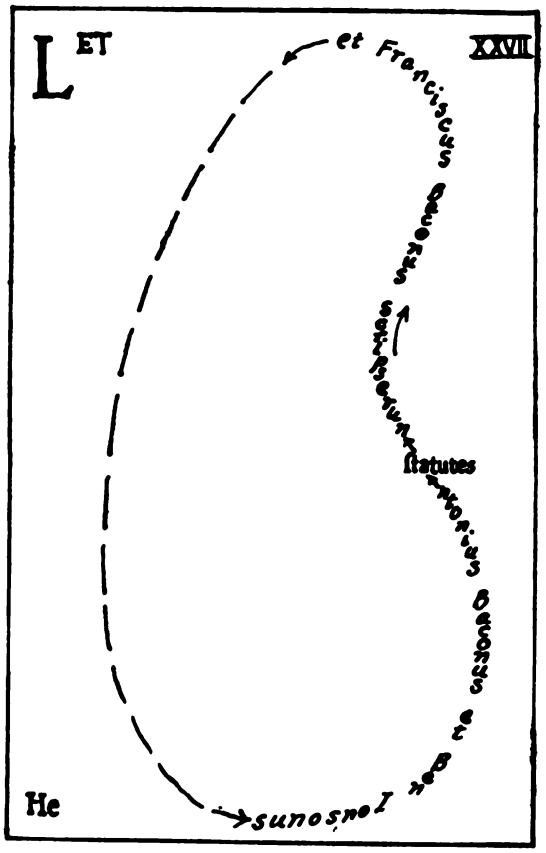
FIGURE XXVI.



From the "T" of "That" in the ninth line read
to the right and up
down the outside
to the left and up
to the "A" of "And" in the tenth line, spelling backward

"*Antonius Baconus et Franciscus Baconus et Ben Ionsonus invenerunt.*"

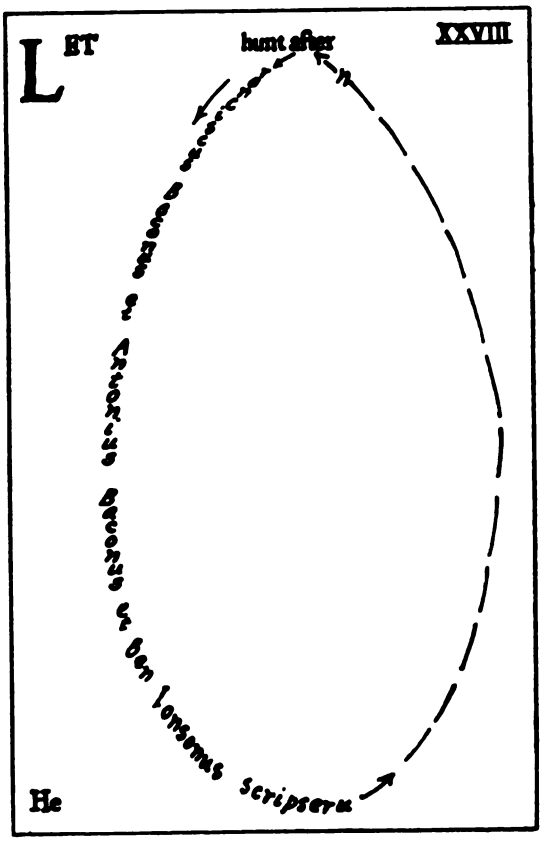
FIGURE XXVII.



From the first "t" of "ſtatutes" in the seventeenth line read
to the left and up
down the outside
to the right and up
to the "a" of "ſtatutes," spelling backward

"*Antonius Baconus et Ben Ionsonus et Franciscus Baconus scripserunt.*"

FIGURE XXVIII.



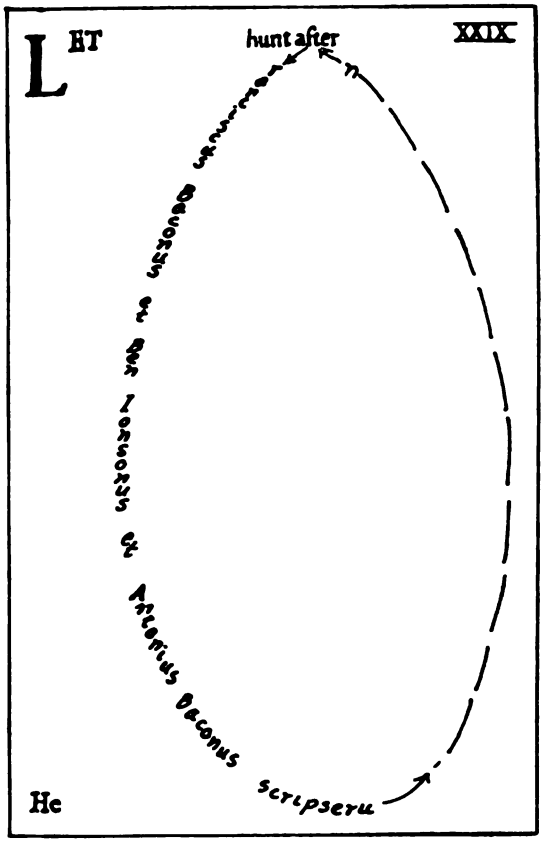
From the "f" of "after" in the first line read

to the left and down
up the outside
to the left

to the "t" of "after"

"*Franciscus Baconus et Antonius Baconus et Ben Ionsonus scripserunt.*"

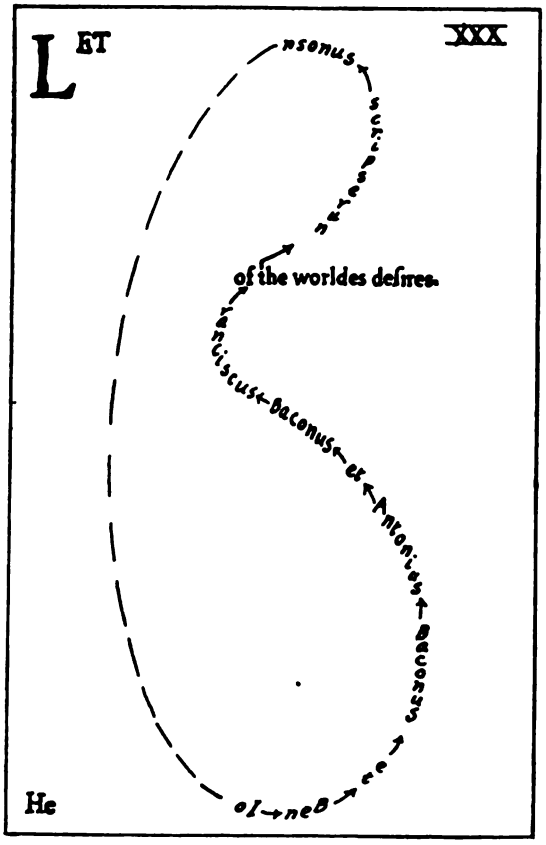
FIGURE XXIX.



From the same "f" to the same "t" read in the same manner

"*Franciscus Baconus et Ben Ionsonus et Antonius Baconus scripserunt.*"

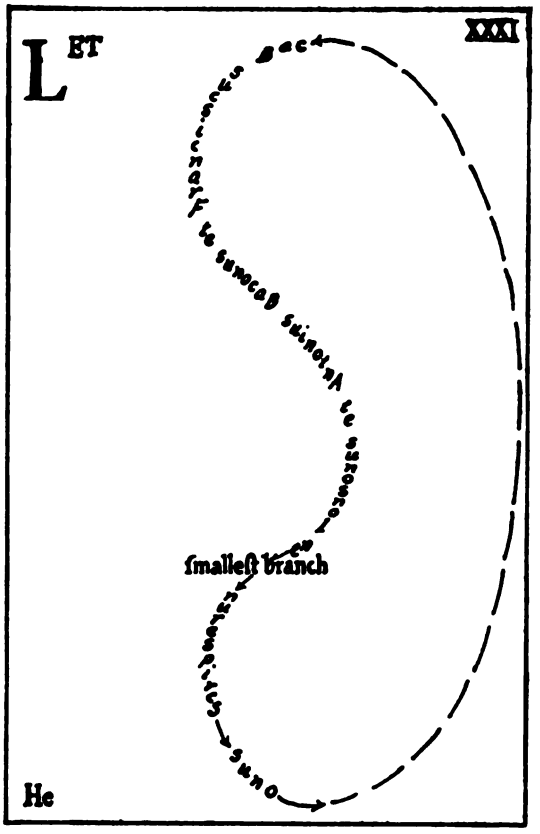
FIGURE XXX.



From the "t" of the second "the" in the tenth line read
to the right and up
down the outside
to the right and up
to the "f" of "of" in the tenth line, spelling backward

"*Franciscus Baconus et Antonius Baconus et Ben Ionsonus scripserunt.*"

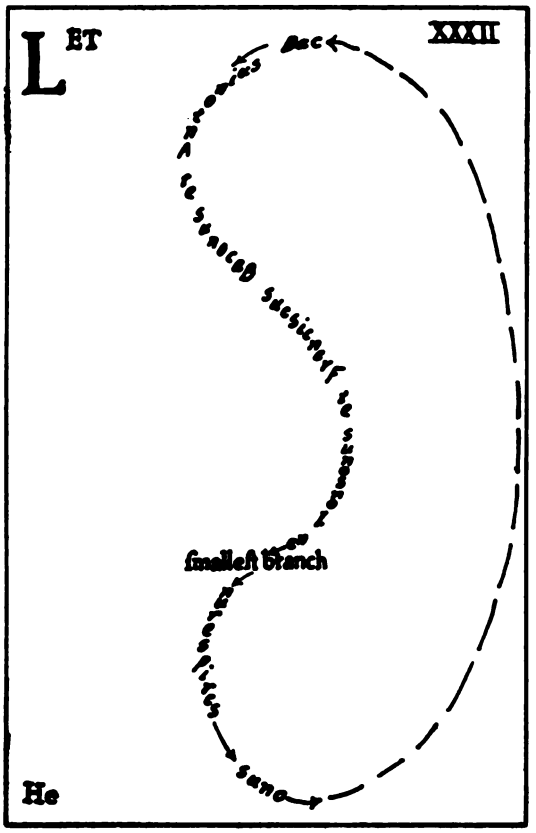
FIGURE XXXI.



From the "t" of "ſmalleſt" in the twenty-first line read
to the left and down
up the outside
to the left and down
to the "b" of "branch" in the twenty-first line, spelling backward

"*Ben Ionsonus et Antonius Baconus et Franciscus Baconus scripserunt.*"

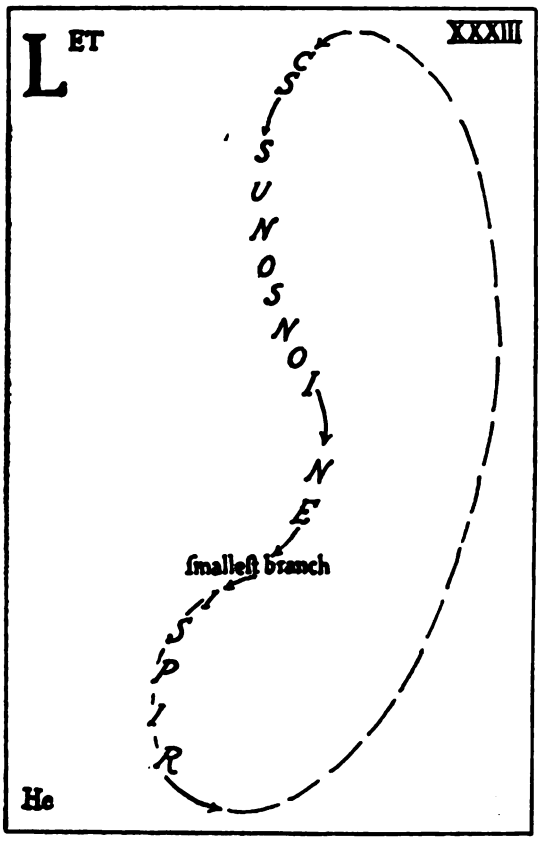
FIGURE XXXII.



From the same "t" to the same "b" read in the same manner, backward

"*Ben Ionsonus et Franciscus Baconus et Antonius Baconus scripserunt.*"

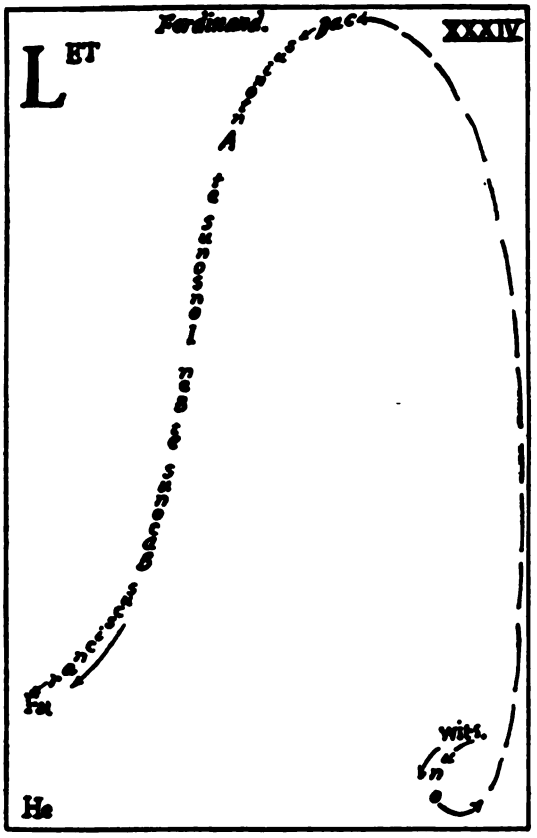
FIGURE XXXIII.



From the same "t" to the same "b" read in the same manner, but on the terminals, backward

"*BEN IONSONUS SCRIPSIT.*"

FIGURE XXXIV.

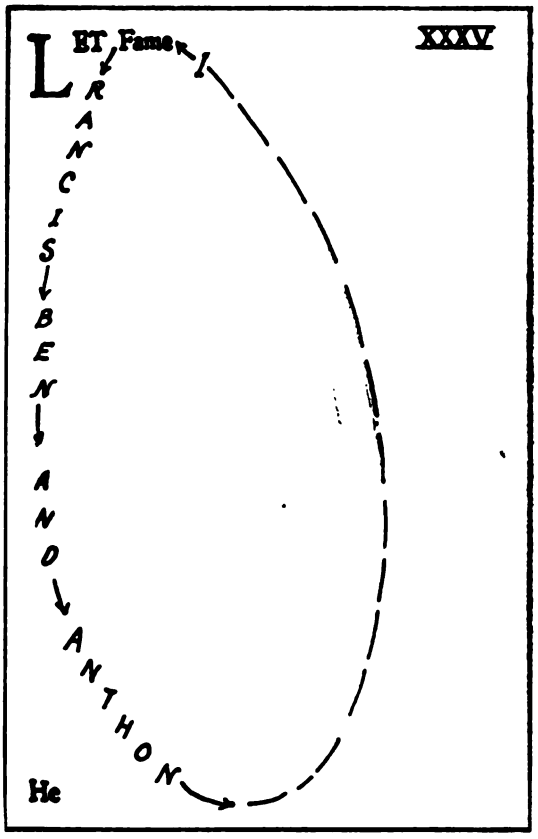


For the sake of a little fun take the text and the name of Ferdinand, an odd number of lines.

Read from the "s" of "wits" in the twenty-seventh line
down to the left
up the outside
to the left and down
to the "F" of "Fat," spelling backward

"*Franciscus Baconus et Ben Ionsonus et Baconus.*"

FIGURE XXXV.

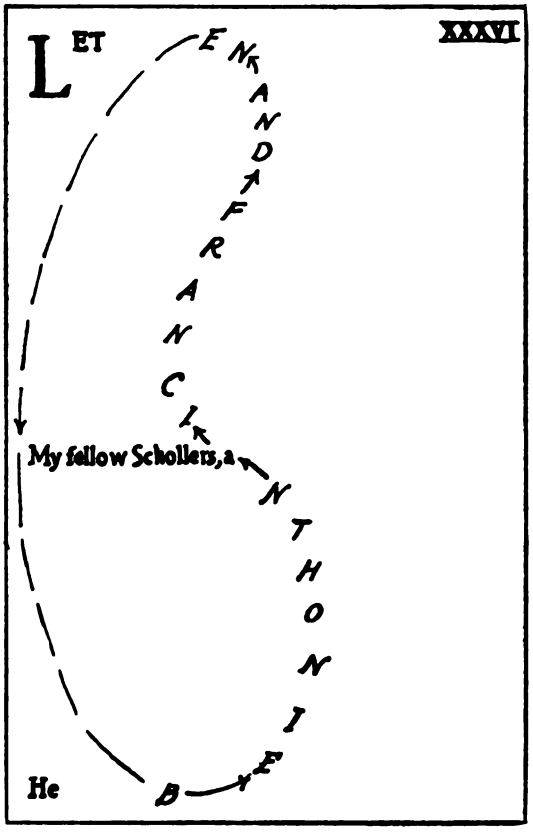


From the "F" of "Fame" in the first line read on terminals through the text
to the left and down
up the outside
to the left
to the "e" of "Fame"

"*FRANCIS BEN AND ANTHONIE.*"

The two terminals of any word are contiguous terminals; hence this acrostic keys.

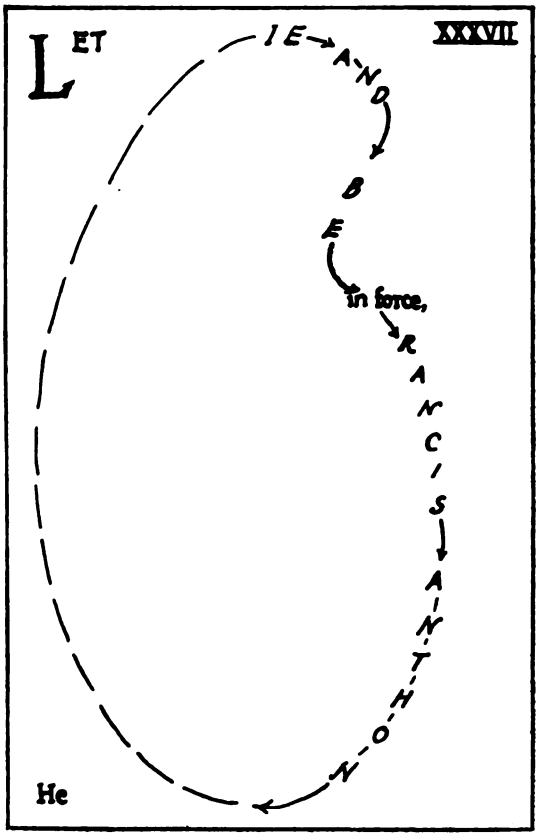
FIGURE XXXVI.



From the final "s" of "Schollers" in the seventeenth line read on terminals
to the left and up
down the outside
to the right and up
to the "a" of "and" in the seventeenth line, spelling backward

"ANTHONIE BEN AND FRANCIS."

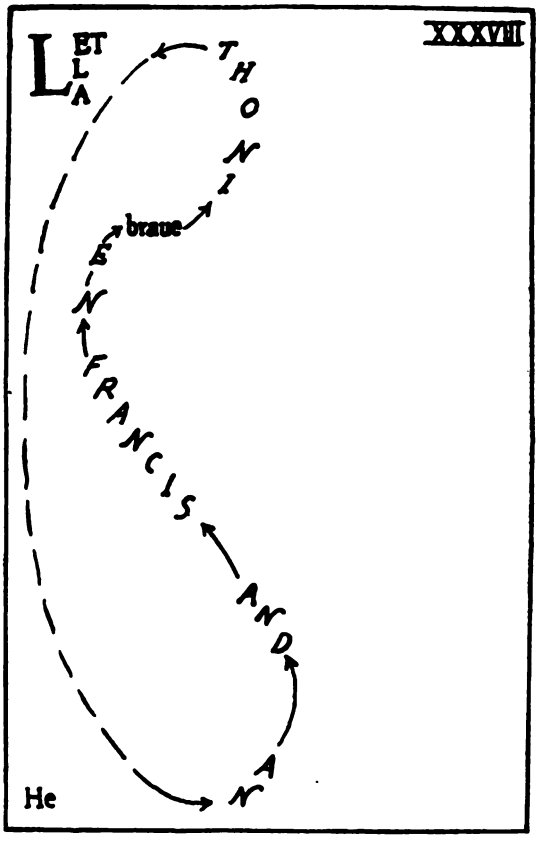
FIGURE XXXVII.



From the "f" of "force" in the eleventh line read on terminals
to the right and down
up the outside
to the right and down

"FRANCIS ANTHONIE AND BEN."

FIGURE XXXVIII.



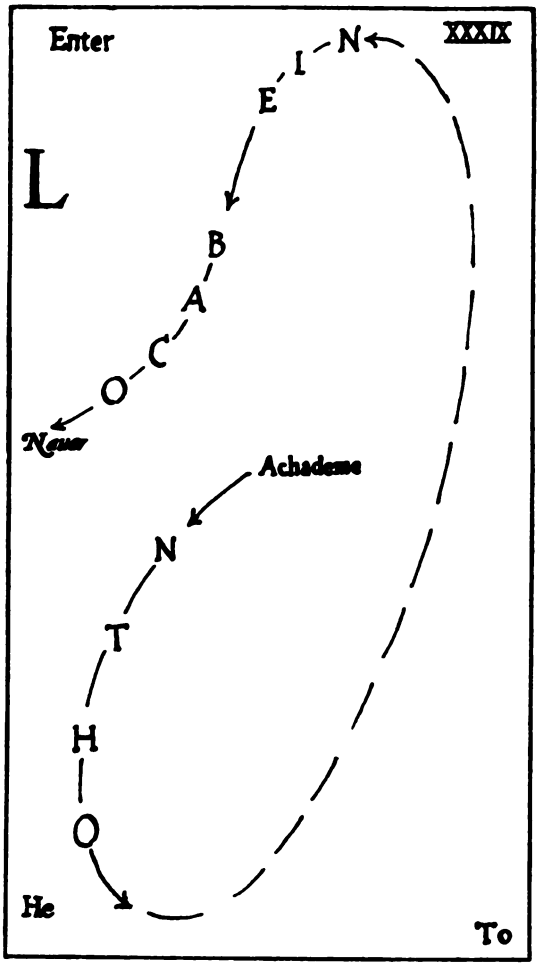
From the "e" of "braue" in the eighth line read on terminals through the text

to the right and up
down the outside
to the right and up

to the "b" of "braue," spelling backward

"*BEN FRANCIS AND ANTHONIE.*"

FIGURE XXXIX.



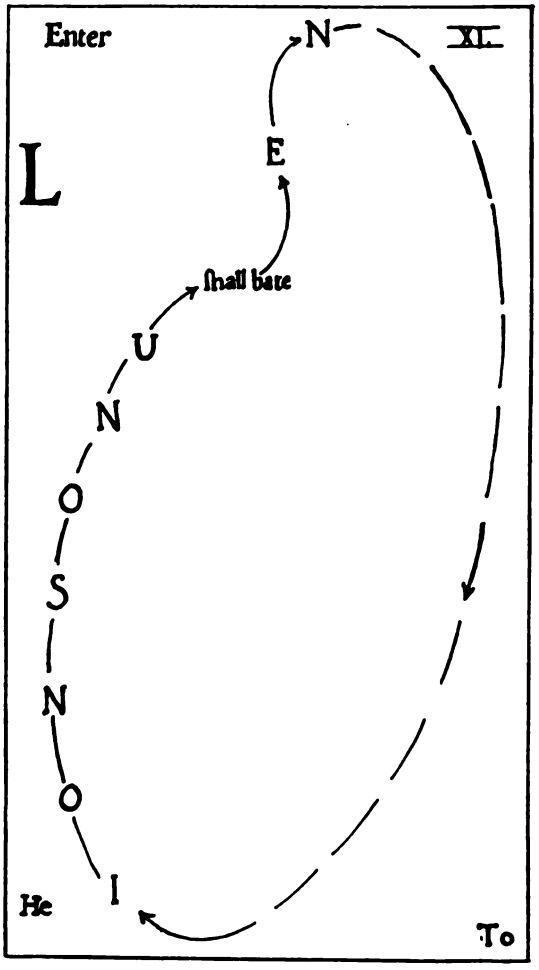
Taking the whole page except the catch word "To" read on initials from the "A" of "Achademe" in the thirteenth line

to the left and down
up the outside
to the left and down

to the "N" of "Nauar"

"ANTHONIE BACON.

FIGURE XL.



From the "b" of "bate" in the sixth line of the text read on initials
to the right and up
down the outside
to the left and up
to the "ſ" of "ſhall" in the sixth line

"BEN IONSONUS."

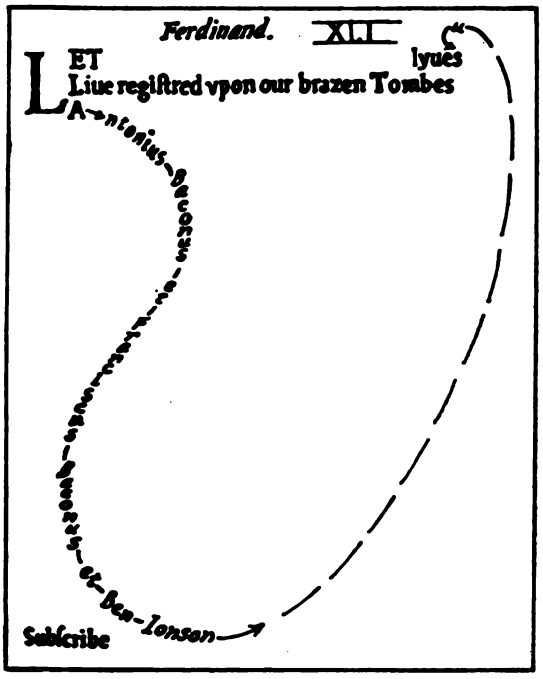
"DOUBLE ENTENTE"

We have thus far read our acrostics so that they key completely through the speech or the text or the page. The reader with the use of a little imagination may have traced something of what may be called "double entente," or of a suggested meaning in the words on which the acrostics begin and end, especially in Figures II, IV, V, XIII, XIV, XVIII and XIX.

In the diagrams now to be shown the acrostics read in such a way as to leave out or *expose* or *unmask* certain words which will be seen to be suggestive of a hidden meaning.

This is accomplished by reading the acrostic between the terminals of the words that it is desired to "expose" or between the terminals next to such words.

FIGURE XLI.

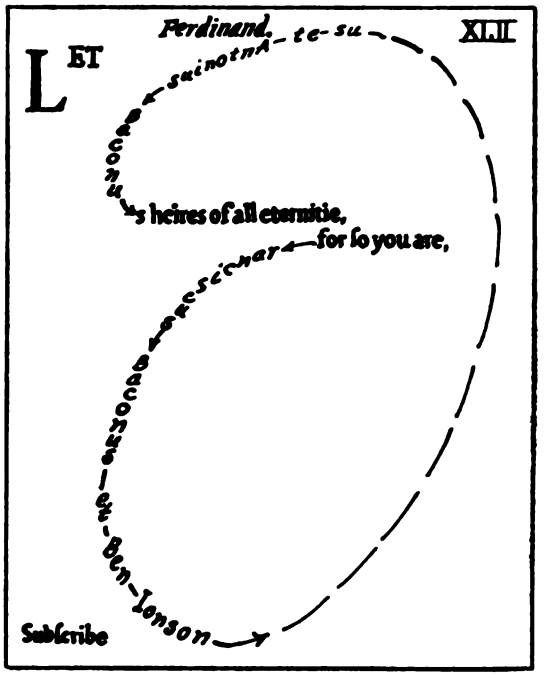


Take the "speech and Ferdinand."

From the "A" of "And" in the third line of the speech read
to the right and down
up the outside
to the left and down
to the "s" of "lyues" in the first line, thus leaving the entire second line out of the acrostic and reading

"*Antonius Baconus et Franciscus Baconus et Ben Ionsonus*"
"Liue regiſtred vpon our brazen Tombes."

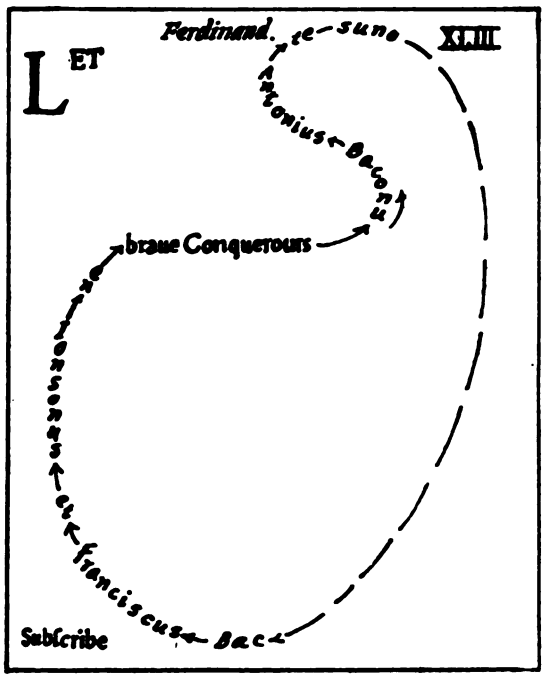
FIGURE XLII.



From the "f" of "for" in the eighth line read
to the left and down
up the outside
to the left and down
to the "s" of "vs" in the seventh line, so that we read

"heires of all eternitie" "for ſo you are"
"*Franciscus Baconus et Ben Ionsonus et Antonius Baconus.*"

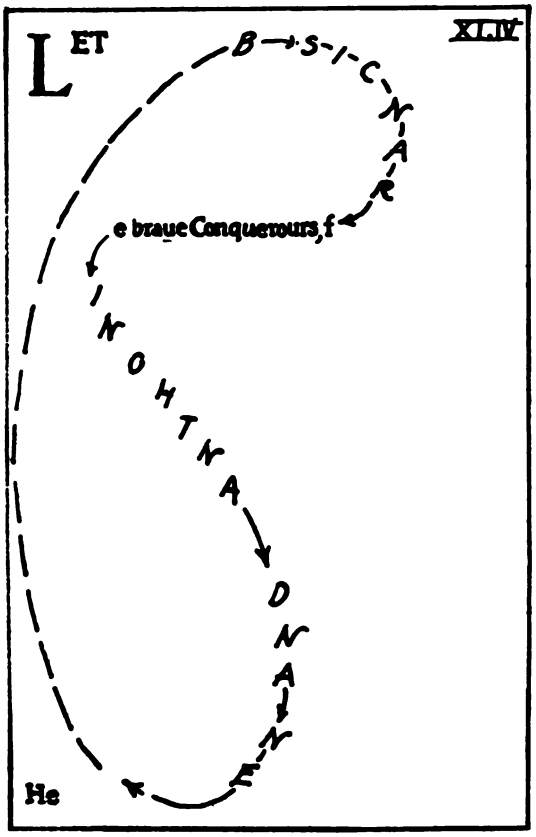
FIGURE XLIII.



From the "s" of "Conquerors" in the eighth line read
to the right and up
down the outside
to the left and up
to the "b" of "braue," spelling backward so that we read

"*Ben Ionsonus et Franciscus Baconus*
et Antonius Baconus"
"braue Conquerors."

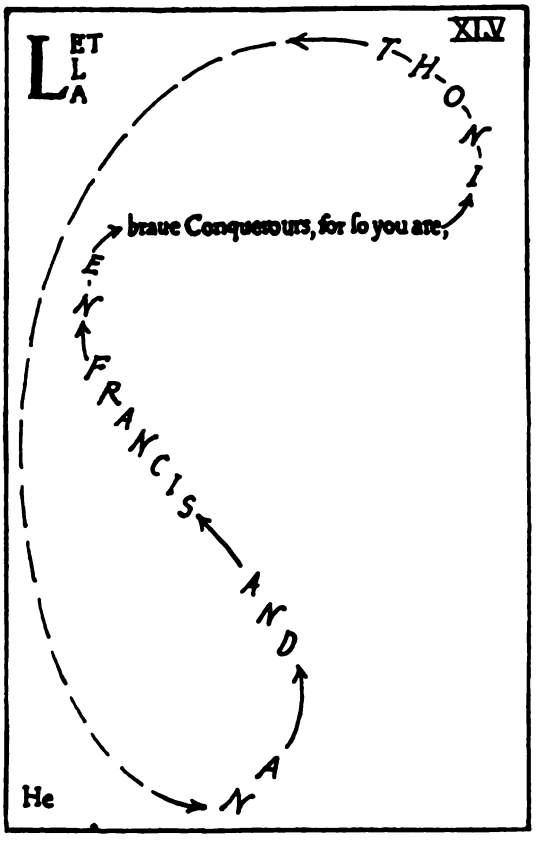
FIGURE XLIV.



Take the text again.
From the final "e" of "Therefore" in the eighth line read on terminals
to the left and down
up the outside
to the right and down
to the "f" of "for" in the eighth line, so that we read backward

"*FRANCIS BEN AND*
ANTHONIE"
"braue Conquerours."

FIGURE XLV.

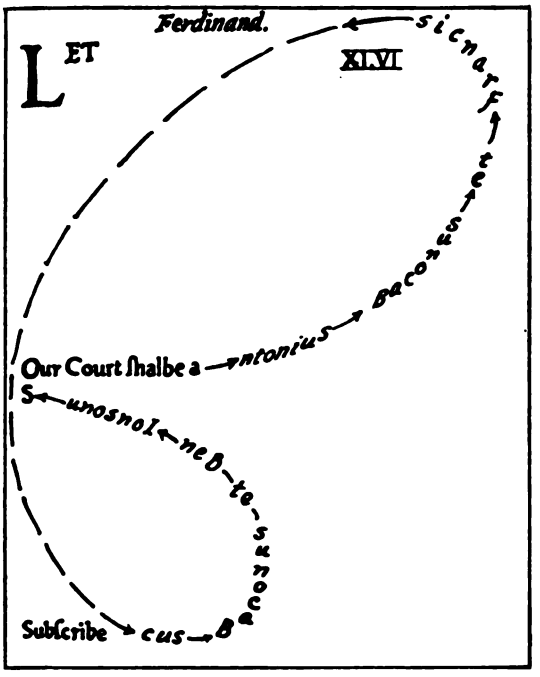


From the "e" of "are" in the eighth line read on terminals
to the right and up
down the outside
to the right and up
to the "b" of "braue" in the eighth line, spelling backward so that we read

"*BEN FRANCIS AND ANTHONIE*"

"braue Conquerours, for ſo you are."

FIGURE XLVI.

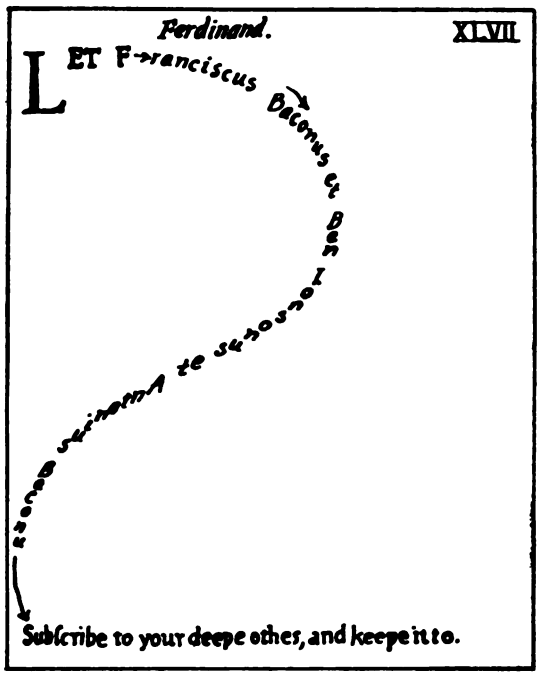


Take the "Speech and Ferdinand" again.

From the article "a" in the thirteenth line read
to the right and up
down the outside
to the right and up
to the "S" of "Still" so that we read

"Our Court shalbe"
"*Antonius Baconus et Franciscus Baconus et Ben Ionsonus.*"

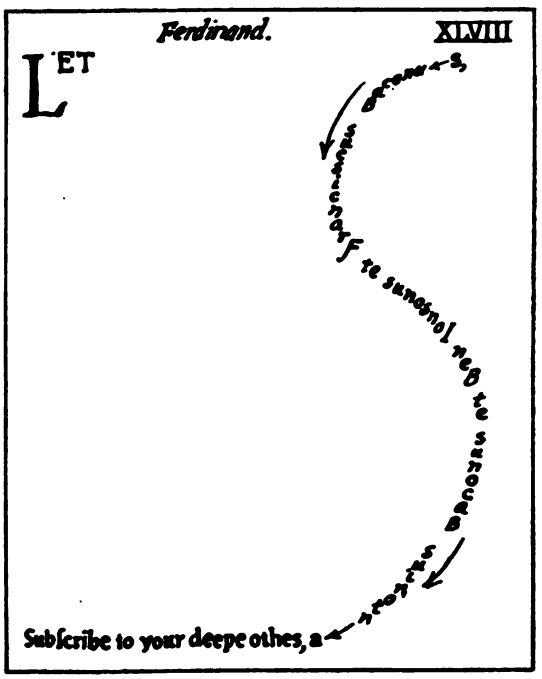
FIGURE XLVII.



From the "F" of "Fame" in the first line read
to the right and down
to the "S" of "Subſcribe" in the last line, so that we read

"Let" "*Franciscus Baconus et Ben Ionsonus et Antonius Baconus*"
"Subſcribe to your deepe othes, and keepe it to."

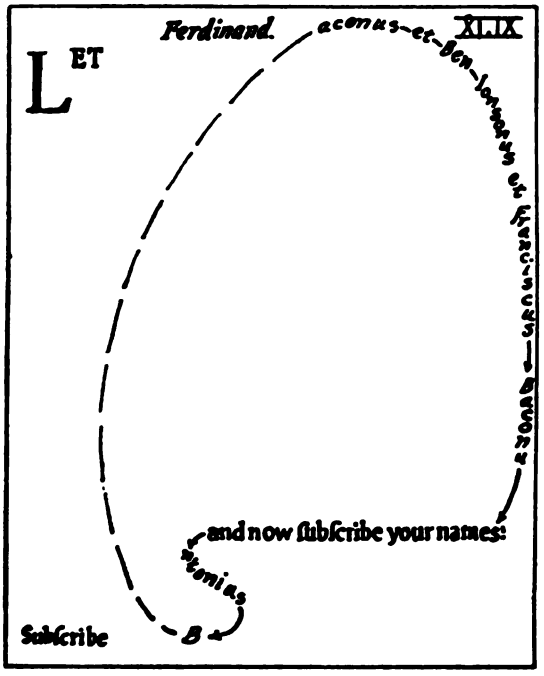
FIGURE XLVIII.



From the "s" of "lyues" in the first line read
to the left and down
to the "a" of "and" in the last line, spelling backward so that we read

"Subſcribe to your deepe othes"
"*Antonius Baconus et Ben Ionsonus et Franciscus Baconus.*"

FIGURE XLIX.



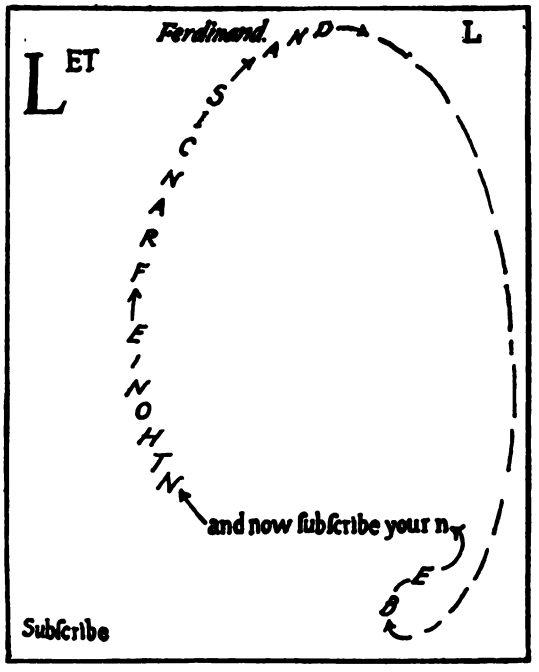
From the "a" of "and" in the nineteenth line read

to the left and down
up the outside
to the right and down

to the "s" of "names," so that we read

"and now ſubſcribe your names"
"*Antonius Baconus et Ben Ionsonus et Franciscus Baconus.*"

FIGURE L.



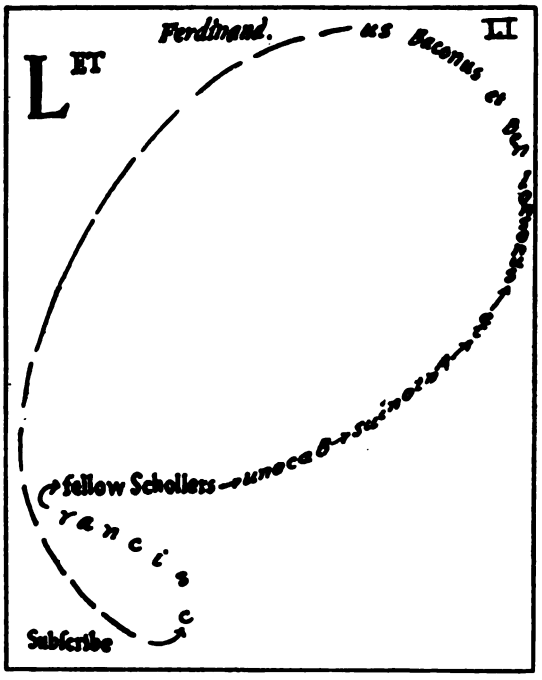
From the "a" of "and" in the nineteenth line read on terminals through the "speech and Ferdinand"

to the left and up
down the outside
to the left and up

to the "n" of "names" so that we read

"and now ſubſcribe your"
"*ANTHONIE FRANCIS AND BEN.*"

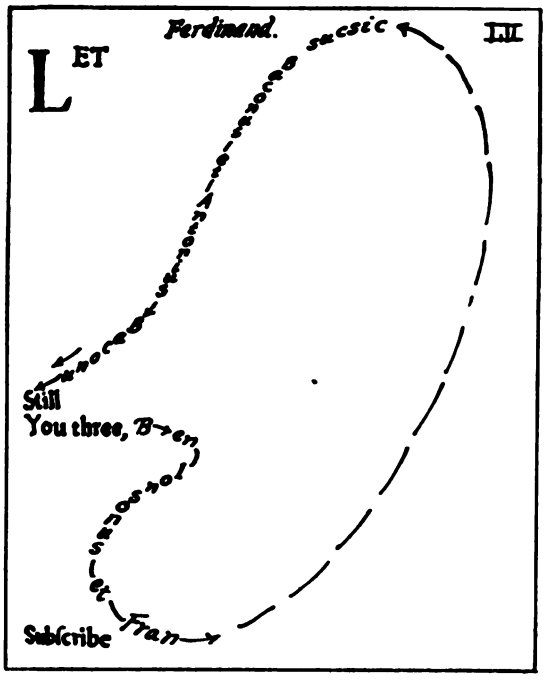
FIGURE LI.



From the "s" of "Schollers" in the seventeenth line read
to the right and up
down the outside
to the right and up
to the "f" of "fellow" in the seventeenth line, spelling backward so that we read

"*Franciscus Baconus et Ben Ionsonus et Antonius Baconus*"
"Fellow Schollers."

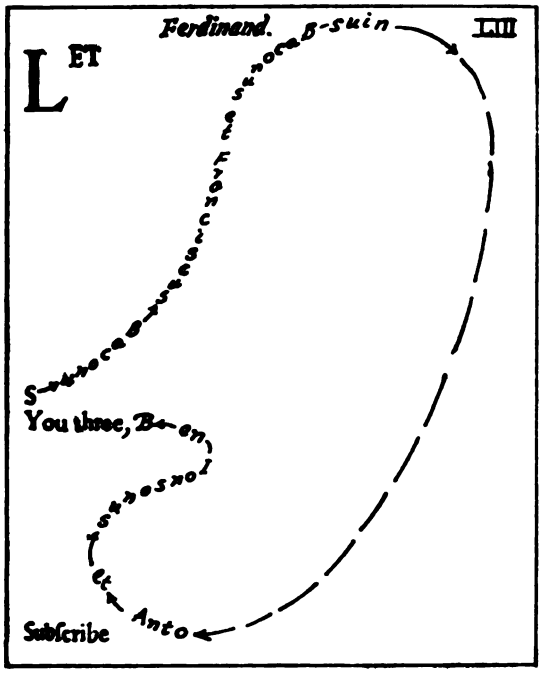
FIGURE LII.



From the "B" of "Berowne" in the fifteenth line read
to the right and down
up the outside
to the left and down
to the "S" of "Still" in the twelfth line, so that we read

"You three"
"*Ben Ionsonus et Franciscus Baconus et Antonius Baconus.*"

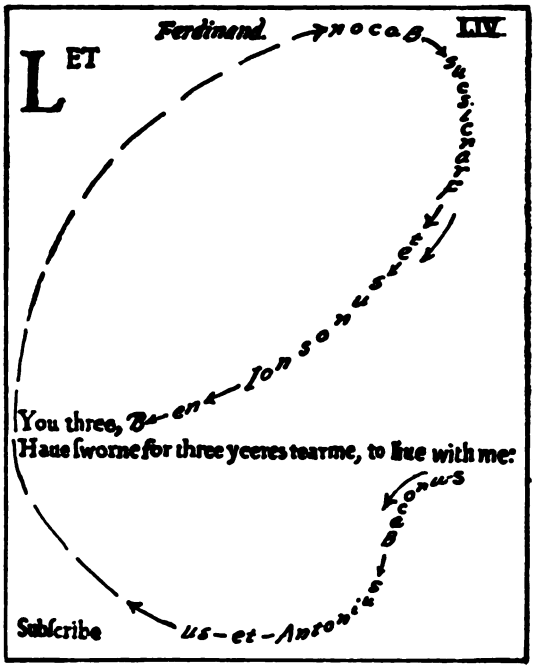
FIGURE LIII.



Reverse the reading so as to read the names backward and we have

"You three"
"*Ben Ionsonus et Antonius Baconus et Franciscus Baconus.*"

FIGURE LIV.

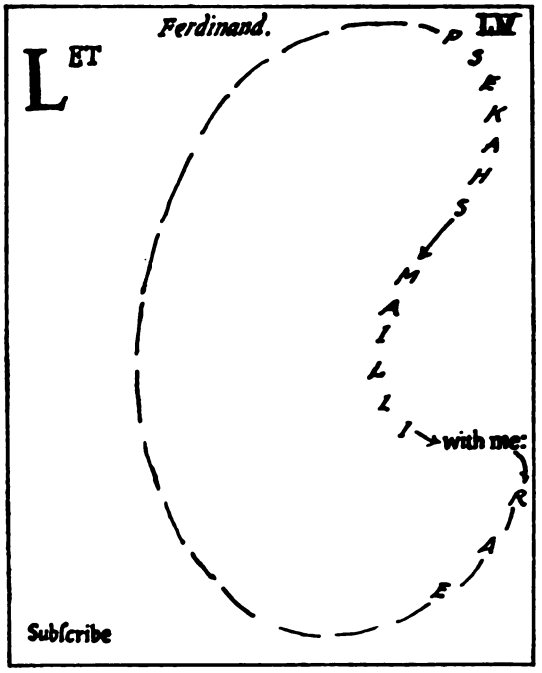


From the final "s" of "ſtatutes" in the seventeenth line read
to the left and down
up the outside
to the right and down
to the "B" of "Berowne," spelling the names backward so that we read

"You three"
"*Ben Ionsonus et Franciscus Baconus et Antonius Baconus*"
"Haue ſworne for three yeeres tearme, to liue with me."

"To live with whom?" We may ask. Look back at figure XVIII.

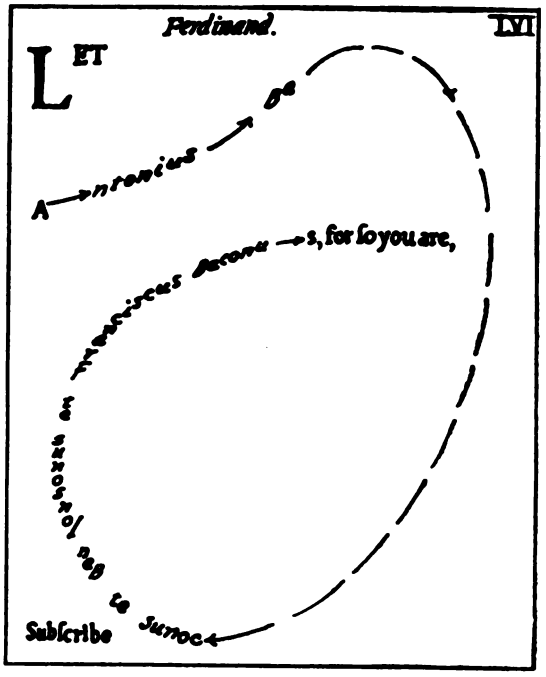
FIGURE LV.



From the "e" of "me" in the sixteenth line read on terminals
to the right and down
up the outside
to the right and down
to the "w" of "with," spelling backward and reading

"with me"
"*WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE.*"

FIGURE LVI.

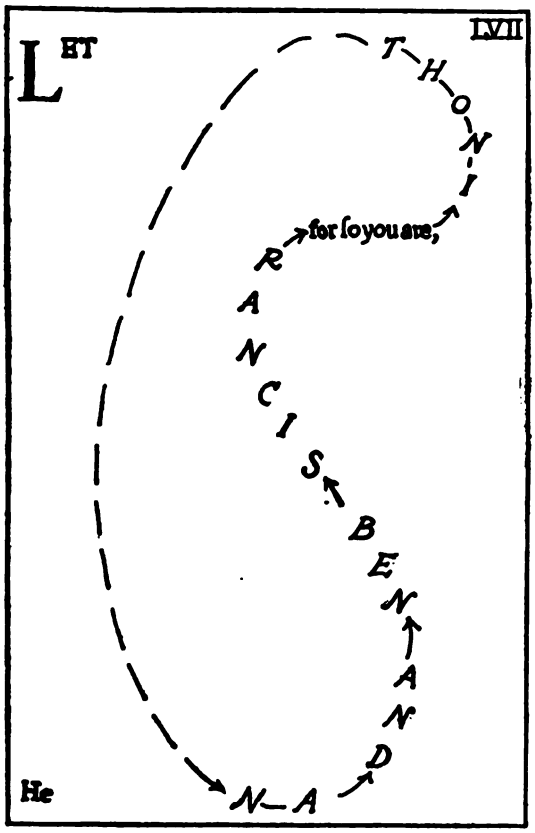


Take the *text* of Ferdinands' speech alone.

From the "A" of "And" in the seventh line read
to the right and up
down the outside
to the left and up
to the "s" of "Conquerours" in the eighth line, so that we read

"*Antonius Baconus et Ben Ionsonus et Franciscus Baconus*"
"for ſo you are."

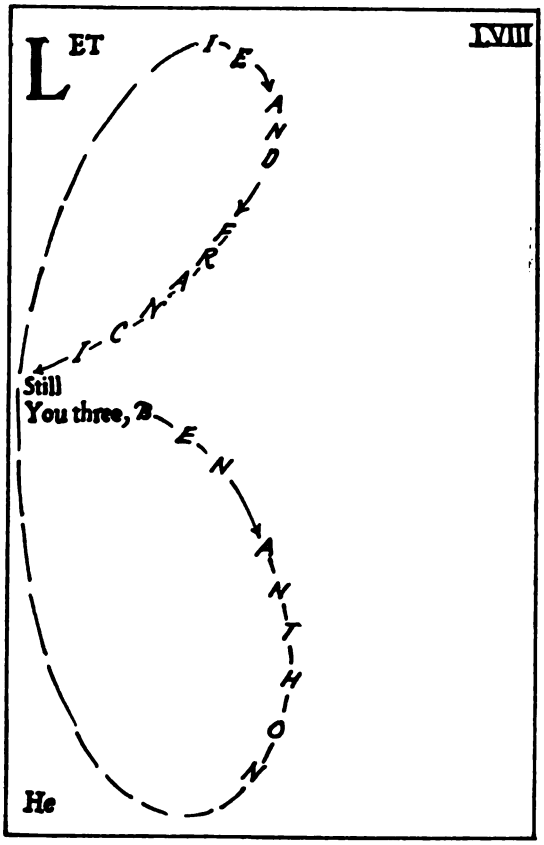
FIGURE LVII.



Next using the entire text read on terminals from the "e" of "are" in the eighth line
to the right and up
down the outside
to the right and up
to the "f" of "for" in the eighth line, spelling backward, so that we read

"*FRANCIS BEN AND ANTHONIE*"
"for ſo you are"

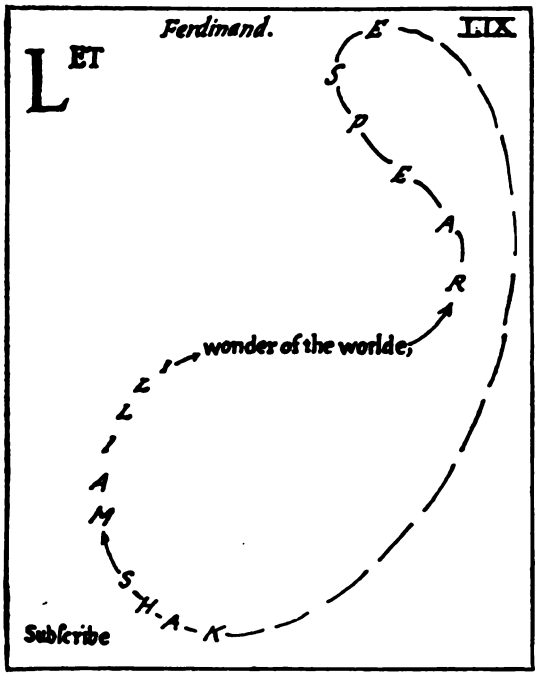
FIGURE LVIII.



Taking the whole text again read on terminals from the "B" of "Berowne" in the fifteenth line
to the right and down
up the outside
to the right and down
to the "S" of "Still"

"You three"
"*BEN ANTHONIE AND FRANCIS.*"

FIGURE LIX.

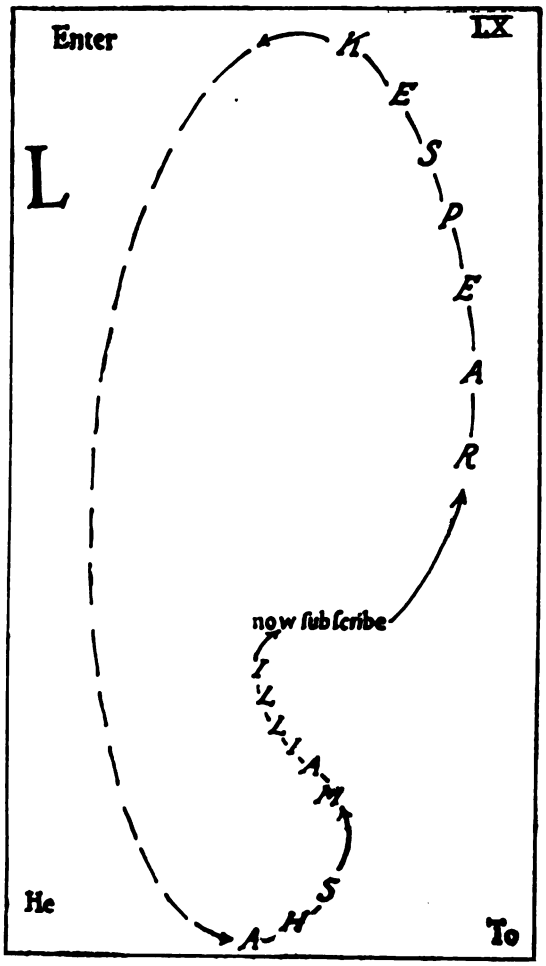


Return to the "speech and Ferdinand."

From the "e" of "worlde" in the twelfth line read on terminals
to the right and up
down the outside
to the left and up
to the "w" of "wonder" in the twelfth line backward, so that we read

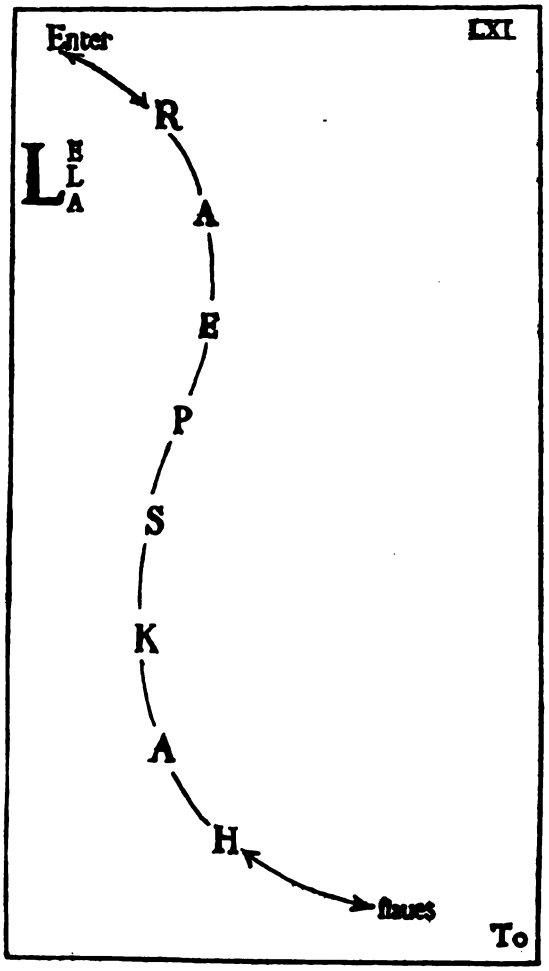
"wonder of the worlde"
"*WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE.*"

FIGURE LX.



Using the whole page read from the "e" of "ſubſcribe" in the nineteenth line
to the right and up
down the outside
to the right and up
to the "w" of "now," spelling backward, so that we read
"ſubſcribe"
"*WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE.*"

FIGURE LXI.



We began by reading the Title of the Play. Let us end by reading the author's name.

In reading the acrostics "*WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE*" we might in each case have spelled the surname "*SHAKSPEARE.*"

From the initial "f" of "ſlaues" in the last line of the text read to the left and up to the "E" of "Enter," the first word on the page, on initials

"SHAKSPEARE"

Read the name back again backward on initials to the "f" of "ſlaues."

A FEW MORE QUESTIONS

I am not credulous enough to believe that *all* the acrostics indicated in the diagrams are *intentional*, even if we assume that part of them are.* Does it seem to the reader that they are *all accidental?* For one who answers this question in the affirmative the case is ended. But of those who see an evidence of intention in the group of acrostics taken together I should like to ask a few more questions: —

What relation is indicated on the part of Anthonie and Francis Bacon and Ben Ionson to this particular play by the repeated occurrences of the three names in all their permutations and combinations with and without the Latin verbs "scripserunt" and invenerunt?"†

What did they write? What did they devise?

What is the relationship between the three men named and "William Shakespeare," between the play and "William Shakespeare," the "wonder of the worlde" (Fig. LIX), "with" whom the other three have "ſworne for three yeares tearme to liue," (Figs. LIV and LV) and who like the others "ſubſcribes" his name (Fig. LX)?

Who or what was this "William Shakespeare"?

Was he the Stratford boy? The actor and the theatre owner of London? The poet of "Orthodox" tradition? The "unlettered rustic" of the "High Baconian"? The pseudonym? The inspiring genius?

Is he to be identified with either, or all of the three men named?

When the answer is given to the question "Who was William Shakespeare?" the authorship problem will be solved.

* This statement may need a word of explanation. I would not attempt to distinguish between the accidental and intentional in individual cases, if there is such a distinction. But accidental acrostics do occur with a frequency which can be approximately determined. The question is this; "Is the frequency indicated in the diagrams so exceptional and unusual as to signify intention?"

The only serious and searching criticism of Mr. Booth's work which I have seen is in the form of a letter in the *New York Nation* in the issue of Jan. 20, 1910, from Prof. Frederick E. Pierce of Yale University. His mathematical demonstration appears not to meet the facts presented in this paper. It may be that a development of Prof. Pierce's method will solve the problem that those facts present.

† Notice that all six permutations in the order of the three names ANTHONIE, BEN AND FRANCIS are to be found.

Substantially every expression of address applied by Ferdinand to Berowne, Dumaine and Longauill also appears as if applied in acrostic to Anthonie Bacon, Ben Ionson and Francis Bacon, and the only time that Ferdinand refers to himself alone (in the words "with me") a curious acrostic reveals the name "William Shakespeare." Do these facts suggest that "William Shakespeare" is addressing Anthonie Bacon, Ben Ionson and Francis Bacon?

Do the "exposed" words suggest a secret pact on the part of the "interior" or acrostic characters, as well as on the part of the exterior characters?

QUESTIONS FOR THE SHAKESPEAREAN

Granting for a moment the truth of the tradition that the actor, the dramatist, the householder of Stratford *were* one and the same man, on what other ground than surmise and supposition have been based the whole critical analysis of the plays and of collaboration in the plays and selection and rejection in the formation of the "canon"?

Is there any actual proof that Peele and Greene and Marlowe and Fletcher had the part in this or that work that "Orthodox" criticism assigns one or the other?

Why may we not question whether others may not have had as great or an even greater part in the greatest literary works in the English language?

And if we name Anthonie or Francis Bacon, or Walter Raleigh or Ben Ionson or others as possible collaborators, is there any occasion for excitement or crimination?

Are you not making the same mistakes in your methods of "defense" that other "standpatters" have made since the world began?

Why not look for *the truth* instead of defending an *alleged* truth?

QUESTIONS FOR THE BACONIAN

Granting that Francis and Anthonie Bacon and Ben Ionson, or either of them had a hand in any or all of the Shakespeare writings, what are the facts that warrant most of the attacks made

by "High Baconians" on the reputed genius of Stratford and of London?

The paucity of knowledge and evidence is the basis on which a great deal of surmise (and even nonsense) in regard to the "man of Stratford" may properly be discarded. Is it reasonable to build on the same paucity of evidence a theory regarding this same man, equally baseless, but going to the other extreme?

For all that we *know* he *may* or *may not* have been a "divine poet," or an "unlettered rustic." From what we *know* we can *prove* neither.

A PLEA FOR FAIRNESS

To both Baconians and Shakespeareans it may well appear that no one has yet reached the whole truth in regard to the mooted authorship and that only by patient and persevering research can the truth be reached.

Perhaps it may be clear also that only a comparatively few of the men on either (or any) side of this question have really investigated the subject personally, and that of those who have done so, there are men of learning, of judgment, and of eminence to be found on both sides.

Let us not then assume that the holding of *any* opinion on this subject is *prima facie* evidence either of superior wisdom or of mental aberration. Why should not reasonable men treat this, one of the most interesting literary problems ever propounded, as a fair open question, and treat each other accordingly?

CONCLUSION

In conclusion I wish to state that the first and last pages of most of the quartos and many of the title pages, are rich in acrostics, often repeated in the same passage, and often grouped so that the same combinations occur in closely related passages.

These acrostics, if "intentional" and "exclusive," indicate that certain names, sometimes four, sometimes three, oftener two, (but these two in all cases) have been inserted in the text for some purpose. What that purpose was, and whose, is a subject that demands careful study, if an intentional acrostic process be first determined.

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